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The Week

DESPERATE efforts are being made behind the scenes to bring about a truce between China and Japan. On Monday it was announced at Geneva that representatives of the two nations there had agreed to tentative terms of a truce, subject to acceptance by their governments and also by military leaders at Shanghai—a curious phraseology which openly admits that the civilian governments have little control over the military forces. In a conference held under neutral auspices at Shanghai, roughly similar truce terms were set up and also reported to the two governments, although these terms were declared in advance to be unacceptable. There is no doubt that Japan has burned her fingers badly in the Shanghai venture, and would like to find some way out. But it is characteristic of militarists the world over that they refuse to give in while things are going badly, until their resources are utterly exhausted; and when things are going well, they naturally refuse to stop until they have attained all possible objectives. This is true of the commanders, although with lessened force since they have been fighting only a defensive campaign. It should go without saying that no truce will take place until the military leaders accept it; we have repeatedly in recent months seen the Japanese government promise one thing while Japanese soldiers continue to do another.

EVEN in the unlikely event that the Shanghai conflict is suspended, the Far Eastern situation will remain of the gravest character. Manchuria is now ruled by a Japanese-controlled dummy government, and the Chinese are certain to continue their military operations there, in the effort to oust the Japanese or, failing that, to cause them all the trouble possible. Still more serious is the threat of war between Japan and Soviet Russia. No sensible person can doubt the genuineness of Russia's desire to keep the peace; the hope of success in the Five Year Plan would be sufficient motive if there were no other. But even the U.S.S.R. will be forced to fight if Japan pushes her hard enough. The Russians give every evidence of believing that Japan is preparing to attack them in the spring; and in the meantime, they see their old enemies, the White Russians, hand in glove with the Japanese; they report a threatening massing of troops along the border between Korea and Siberia; and there is continuous friction over the desire of the Japanese to use the Soviet-controlled railroads in military operations. A few months ago, the world would have refused credence to the idea that Japan would deliberately provoke a war with Russia; but today we have good reason to believe that there is no depth of bloodthirsty madness to which her military leaders will not sink.

THE economic nemesis which is overtaking Japan as a result of her military adventures is clearly foreshadowed in recently published figures. The appropriations for the Shanghai and Manchuria expeditions up to March 31 have totaled nearly 100,000,000 yen, and expenses have exceeded estimates. This equals about one-third of the military expenses in the year ending March 31, 1929, which were 17 percent of all the expenditures of the

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This will necessitate new internal loans, although debt services take 11.5 percent of the budget. Meanwhile, Japan's foreign credit is ruined. Since the gold standard was abandoned, the yen has fallen to the record low of thirty-one and five-eighths cents—it fell five points after the Shanghai expedition started. Japan has an adverse foreign trade balance, which is rapidly growing heavier. She cannot pay for all the foreign goods she needs unless she either borrows abroad or ships out gold. But she cannot borrow. Government 6½ bonds, issued at 92½ in 1924, have fallen to 67⅜ in New York, while the 5½'s, issued in 1930, recently touched 57. Gold shipments to the United States between July and December, 1931, were $193,005,620, as compared with $11,825,125 during the corresponding period of 1930. The gold reserve shrank from $425,000,000 on June 30 to $234,000,000 at the close of 1931. In spite of the embargo on gold exports, the Yokohama Specie Bank has been allowed to send out gold to meet its obligations and create new dollar credits. If the war goes on, we expect Japanese foreign obligations to be defaulted and Japanese purchases of American goods to be sharply curtailed. Internally, she may get along with accelerated borrowing and inflation. But we all know what the end of that process is.

THE Welfare Council of New York City, which three weeks ago issued a study of the pyschological effects of unemployment on the individual and the family, now reports on the decline of the standard of living in this country. According to the Council, families are suffering from a lack of the right kind of food, children who formerly drank milk are now drinking coffee, less fruit and vegetables are being eaten, meat is being served only once a week or not at all, and the standards of nutrition are growing steadily worse. Owing to unemployment, families are doubling up in living quarters, and the investigators for the Council often found cases where three or more families were living together. There has been, moreover, a terrific drain on the free clinics of the hospitals where cases now sometimes have to wait weeks or months for admission. Patients have also been discharged much sooner than would normally be the case. The report also states that there is a great lack of suitable clothing, not only for protection against cold and wet weather, but also as part of the necessary equipment for getting and keep a job. Although the high schools have a larger registration than ever before, part of the increase represents a transfer from private schools, and many boys and girls have had to leave school because they had no suitable clothing or money for carfare or lunches. The report ends with the statement that there has been a general reduction in standards of living among moderate and low-income groups, while the families formerly

THE Democrats in Congress, trying to be even more conservative and in harmony with business prejudices than are the Republicans, have adopted two policies which are economically indefensible. One is to balance the budget as quickly as possible by sharply curtailing expenses and raising taxes to a greater extent than is recommended by the administration. Enlarged governmental spending is desirable during a depression, and a resulting deficit is not to be regarded with alarm, as long as there is a prospect that it will disappear with the return of economic activity, and as long as tax receipts are high enough to maintain governmental credit and ability to borrow. Some increase of taxes was necessary for this purpose, but it is undesirable at this time to attempt to balance the budget. The other mistaken policy is the resort to a whole series of sales taxes. Taxes which tap incomes and profits, at progressive rates, cannot be passed on to the consumer. They utilize for government purposes funds which otherwise in large measure would be idle during a depression. They tend to restore the balance of purchasing power, and put money into circulation. But taxes on sales and other business transactions raise prices, limit the purchasing power of the mass of consumers and divert for governmental expenses money which is already in circulation. They are not, like income and profits taxes, adjusted to ability to pay, and they yield less in proportion to the expense of collection. We cannot see any necessity for resorting to this unsound and undesirable measure.

GOVERNOR Roosevelt's friends have not much reason to be proud of his actions in regard to Sheriff Farley of New York and his successor. It is true that Mr. Roosevelt at last removed Farley from office; but he waited many weeks after that person's gross unfitness was known to everyone, and until even Tammany recognized that he would have to be sacrificed to the public clamor. It now being necessary for the Governor to select someone else for the unexpired portion of Farley's term, he meekly took the nominee handed him by John F. Curry, leader of Tammany Hall, over the protest of numerous civic organizations which urged him to assert his independence and give Tammany the rebuke it so amply deserves. The Governor is determined to do nothing which will cause an open break with Tammany, since he believes he must have its aid, first in getting the Democratic nomination for the presidency and, second, in winning the election if he should be nominated. This may be good political strategy —even that is dubious—but it certainly deserves no better characterization.

TAMMANY last week put over a shrewd piece of propaganda on Samuel Seabury, who has been

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ably knows more about New York's enormous cesspools of graft and corruption than any other living man, journeyed out to Ohio and made a speech strongly endorsing the city-manager plan, and denouncing Tammany more vigorously and tellingly than anyone else has done for decades. Thereupon the Tammany poison-gas squad got into action, and sent the word abroad that Mr. Seabury is a candidate for the presidency, with the result that his recommendations for New York's government were all forgotten and all interest centered upon his personal ambitions. We do not know whether Mr. Seabury is or isn't a candidate; he says he isn't, and his testimony ought to have some weight. Even if he is, we do not see that such an ambition is any more a reproach to him than to anyone else. The essential fact is that the city-manager plan, which would go far to destroy Tammany's strangling grip on the city, would for that and other reasons be an excellent innovation for New York. Whether the citizens of this city have enough collective intelligence and initiative to bring it about is another, and a highly dubious, question.

GERMANY'S critical July days of 1931 are producing their inevitable aftermath. At that time, two of its largest banks, the Darmstädter Bank and the National (Danat) Bank, had failed, threatening to precipitate a general collapse of the entire economy of Germany. Only the prompt action of the Brüning government in guaranteeing the foreign obligations of the Danat Bank and underwriting its domestic debentures for a period to end in April of this year, prevented a catastrophe, and gave Mr. Hoover the opportunity to negotiate his one-year moratorium. By thus creating a system of national control of finance, with its implication of state capitalism, the Brüning government embarked upon a policy that is inimical to its own economic philosophy. From this it is now vainly endeavoring to withdraw by arranging for a financial system to be dominated by three giant banking concerns. By a merger of the Darmstädter and Danat banks with the Dresdener Bank, an institution is to be created the share capital of which will represent 220,000,000 marks, as compared to a capitalization of 144,000,000 marks of the Deutsche Bank, hitherto the largest private financial institution of the Reich. The government program further provides for a third large bank with a capital of approximately 140,000,000 marks by another merger in the Rhineland district. These mergers were indirectly financed by the Reichsbank through its daughter enterprise, the Gold Discount Bank, which took over large blocks of shares in the new combines. Thus the government has obtained for itself a dominant influence in Germany's banking system. Undoubtedly its intent is to undo its unwilling July action by this step and to withdraw from the responsibility it had so reluctantly assumed. But it lies in the can rid itself of responsibility for the solvency of those institutions which supply the life blood to the social organism. Against its will and intent, the government is moving, not toward a restoration and reëstablishment of private enterprise, but in the opposite direction.

THESE are hard times for South American dictators. Looking only at those who have been in the headlines in the fairly recent past, we see that Leguía of Peru has died while imprisoned, Ibañez has fled from Chile, and Washington Luis of Brazil and Dr. Ayora of Ecuador are also out of favor. The most recent to be swept away by the tornado of popular indignation is General Uriburu of Argentina. His exit, to be sure, is somewhat unlike that of his predecessor. It is protected by a faint "constitutional legality." At bottom, however, it is the same. Developments in the last few days prove that his rule was like that of every Latin American dictator. Terror, despotism, lawlessness, favoritism, a strong military arm and incompetence as a ruler—all contributed towards his downfall. In the meantime, his successor, Agustin Justo—another general—is baffled by the Argentine situation. The grandiose promises of General Uriburu have materialized only in a gigantic increase of the national debt, a tremendous deficit, increased taxation and an inflated currency.

SIX months ago, three marine workers named Soderberg, Bunker and Trajer were arrested by the police of New York City for having blown up a barge. According to the police, who are charged with submitting them to the third degree (although the testimony of a stool pigeon made this unnecessary), they were engaged in a war to prevent the barge owners from reducing their pay. The three men are now in prison, being unable to furnish the excessive bail of $100,000. They have, in fact, been unable even to obtain adequate legal defense. Their case comes up within the next few weeks. Carlo Tresca, backed by a committee of liberals, is seeking to raise funds for the defense of the three men, and unless money is immediately forthcoming, they seem likely to go to prison on the questionable testimony of a stool pigeon.

ANTI-RADICAL hysteria seems to be stronger on the Pacific Coast than almost anywhere else. The state of Oregon is its latest theatre, the city of Portland having gone through an extraordinary wave of unreasoning emotion in the past few months. Oregon is one of the states which still have a "criminal syndicalism" law on their books, left over from war times, and about a year ago a campaign was undertaken whose purpose plainly was to force the authorities into acting under this statute. Two Portland newspapers, The Morning Oregonian and The Oregon Journal, gravely warned the unsuspecting populace against the im-

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although there were but a handful of Communists in the state. Solemn cautions to the same effect were issued by R. P. Bonham, local immigration director, and M. R. Bacon, an erstwhile undercover police agent. The Fish Congressional Committee also contributed to the creation of the Red bogeyman. As a result of all this pother, the police finally arrested thirteen men. The first of them to go on trial was Ben Boloff, an illiterate Russian sewer-digger and an inactive member of the Communist party, who had lived quietly in Oregon for nineteen years without ever before getting into trouble of any kind. Boloff was given ten years in the penitentiary, and his conviction has been upheld by the state supreme court, which has twice denied him a rehearing. But then the absurdity of what was happening began to seem evident, even to Oregonians. The second and third of the thirteen cases were tried and resulted in acquittals, and the state thereupon rather ignominiously asked that the remaining ten be dropped. The same newspaper which had fomented the persecution of the Communists now took a much more sensible attitude, even urging Boloff's release and condemning the criminal-syndicalism law. One must welcome these signs of returning sanity, even though the whole episode is thus rendered more than ever ridiculous—to all except Boloff, that is, who faces the prospect of spending ten years in jail because of this display of infantilism by Oregon's leaders.

THESE are rather melancholy days for radio advertisers and the broadcasting stations which depend on them for support. By congressional order, a nationwide investigation of radio advertising is about to be made; and one of its results is likely to be new laws designed to check the large amount of deliberately dishonest and often viciously false advertising which goes over the air—advertising which even the most unethical of printed publications would nowadays hesitate to accept. The depression is adversely affecting the amount of advertising, and many of America's numerous radio stations are having a hard time to keep afloat; and there are straws in the wind indicating a growing revolt among radio listeners over the amount of dreary, vulgar advertising patter to which they are forced to listen. The average "sponsored program" ("sponsored" being radio's Nice Nellie way of saying "paid for,") is now only fifteen minutes in length, and many protests are being received by the stations from owners of sets who complain that they are forced to keep shifting the dials to avoid hearing things they don't like. If any advertiser had brains enough to give the radio audience one solid hour of good music, with no interruption whatever except the announcement of the station required by law, he could undoubtedly build for himself an enormous good will: but what is the use of talking about an Elysian time when advertisers

THE daily press informs us that Governor Roosevelt of New York is considering filling the vacancy in the state Court of Appeals, created by the appointment of Judge Cardozo to the United States Supreme Court, by selecting Mr. Walter Pollak of New York City. We agree with Dr. John Dewey, whose letter on this subject appears on page 102 of the present issue, that this appointment would be an excellent one. This court is second only to the United States Supreme Court in importance; and all the arguments in favor of replacing a liberal with a liberal which apply in the one case are equally pertinent in the other. By abilities, training and career, Mr. Pollak is amply qualified for the post.

> If we should fortify Guam and the Philippines in addition to talking about it, many Americans would be well pleased.
>
> —*Arthur Brisbane, in his syndicated column, February 26, 1932.*

INCLUDING Mr. Arthur Brisbane, who, being much too old and fat to fight and being without children of his own, can cheerfully recommend that other men's sons should go and get killed for no reason.

The Stimson Letter

SECRETARY Stimsons' letter of February 24 to Senator Borah, chairman of the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations, is a document of historical importance. The occasion for this letter was the broad hint of the Japanese foreign office that the Pacific Nine Power Treaty, guaranteeing the sovereignty, the independence and the territorial and administrative integrity of China, was not applicable in the present situation because China did not now have an organized and sovereign government. But the implications of the letter, which reviews and defines the whole position of the United States in regard to the Far Eastern question, go much farther than this.

The first part of the statement recalls the origin and purpose of the "open door" policy. There had been a Sino-Japanese war. At its conclusion other Powers intervened to prevent Japan from consolidating her conquests. These nations in turn were intent on carving out spheres of influence. The Boxer rebellion broke out, directed against all foreigners in China. The situation was dangerous, not only for the future of China, but also for the other nations, whose rivalries with one another arose from their efforts to prey on that weak country.

John Hay advanced the policy of the open door to forestall the development of both dangers. Its two principles were: equality among the nations in commercial opportunity in China and, as the essen-

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China's territorial and administrative integrity. The essence of the policy was to prevent any single nation from attempting to exploit Chinese weakness to her own advantage. The other Powers assented to the policy at the time. On their informal commitments it rested for twenty years. In the Washington Conference of 1921-22, the policy was written into the Nine Power Treaty, which later was formally ratified by the Powers concerned. This treaty was subsequently reënforced by the Kellogg-Briand Pact, obligating all nations to abjure war as an instrument of national policy, and pledging that all controversies should be settled by peaceable adjustment.

In the latter part of the letter, Secretary Stimson makes three important declarations of judgment and policy. One is that the present situation, far from demonstrating any need for revision of the original policy, merely confirms its wisdom. Delay in developing a responsible government in China was foreseen by Messrs. Hay and Hughes and their contemporaries. Chinese instability was the very thing which created the necessity for the open-door and non-interference agreements. Patience is still necessary. The United States government reaffirms its former position. Another is that the hostilities in Manchuria and China, regardless of how the blame for them may be apportioned, cannot be reconciled with faithful observance of the treaties. The existing situation would have been avoided if the treaties had been observed. The third is that the United States reaffirms its note of January 7 to Japan and China, to the effect that it will not recognize "any situation, treaty or agreement entered into by those governments in violation of the covenants of those treaties." The United States hopes that the other governments of the world will adopt the same position. If they do, it believes that the action "will eventually lead to the restoration to China of rights and titles of which she may have been deprived." In spite of its diplomatic wording, this warning is clearly directed to Japan.

For all this we have not a word of adverse criticism. It seems to us unassailable as logic and as common sense. It puts on the record a judgment and a promise which, if adopted by the other Powers, will furnish a means of testing Japan's action and a guide to policy which Japan will find it difficult to ignore, in the long run. Having said this, the United States need write no more notes and can await the possibility of future negotiations. Either Japan must seek an outcome which can be squared with the legal commitments of the rest of the world, or she must be prepared to maintain indefinitely, by force of arms, against all comers in Manchuria and China, a status which the other nations will never recognize as legal. That means that she can attract no foreign capital to help exploit such a status, that she must spend her substance on a vain attempt to police vast alien popu- [illegible] and discreditable sort. To carry out the

a volcano. It would be a position impossible to maintain.

But between these sections of the letter there appears a passage which looks in an entirely different direction. This section asserts that the armament limitation agreed upon at the Washington Conference was dependent upon the adoption of the Nine Power Treaty. "The willingness of the American government to surrender its then commanding lead in battleship construction and to leave its positions at Guam and in the Philippines without further fortification was predicated upon, among other things, the self-denying covenants contained in the Nine Power Treaty, which assured the nations not only of equal opportunity for their Eastern trade, but also against the military aggrandizement of any other power at the expense of China." Modification of one treaty, it is clearly implied, would necessitate modification of the other.

If this means anything at all, it means that we did intend, and still do intend, to build battleships and naval bases to safeguard our trade in the Far East if that trade cannot be safeguarded by treaty. It means that we are ready to fight for the integrity of China, and to engage in a race of naval armament so as to be in a position to do so successfully, if the Japanese persist in violating that integrity. This is as plain a threat of hostilities as was ever incorporated in a diplomatic document. It serves notice on Japan that she must be ready for war with us, if not soon, then at some future time, unless she assents to our interpretation of existing obligations. And it carries the implication that we shall be fighting for trade.

It is one thing to call attention to the wisdom of existing peace treaties, to their violation, and to a pledge that we shall not recognize the result of this violation. This is a justifiable and reasonable support of the public law of nations. It is quite another thing to threaten the use of armed force in support of profit. This passage, we believe, goes far to nullify the effect of the rest of the letter. It will be remembered with bitterness and apprehension long after the existing crisis is over. It issues a challenge which looks straight in the direction of imperialistic war. It embodies a threat which it would be a tragic mistake to execute. We doubt if the American people would be willing to make it good, and we sincerely hope they would not do so. American trade in China is not worth one drop of American blood. And arming to fight, at the other side of the Pacific Ocean, in behalf of a self-government of the Chinese people which is still far from being achieved, would be as recklessly quixotic as any national policy ever adopted in the history of the world.

If a threat of this kind were the only thing which could restrain Japan, it would be far better to leave any interference in Oriental affairs completely out of our calculations. It is power politics of the most

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and silly than the effort of France to enforce her conception of the inviolability of European treaties by maintaining a dominating army. The world will not progress to peace as long as threats of force are made to restrain actions that the several nations do not individually approve.

Strike Against Sweatshop

THE DRESSMAKERS' strike in New York has just ended. The settlement is a reasonable compromise, whose exact terms are not important. What is important, from the public's point of view, is to know that almost certainly the settlement is only a temporary one. Sooner or later—and probably sooner—the workers will again be obliged to resort to strike tactics.

This strike was, of course, only the latest in a long series of revolts against conditions in this branch of the needle industry. Beginning with the great strike in 1909, when the first effective union was established among the dressmakers, the demoralization produced in the industry by the uncontrolled forces of competition has been reduced to some semblance of order and decency only by periodic uprisings of the workers. Since 1920, the position of the dress and waist-makers has steadily deteriorated under the influence of a falling price level and a drastic internal reorganization of the industry. Working conditions, bad enough before 1929, have, during our latest depression, fallen to the standards prevailing in the pre-war sweatshops. Few who have not had the occasion to observe at first hand the devastating effects of bad business can realize how completely the thousands who work for a living in the needle and textile industries have borne the full brunt of this depression in savage slashes of wages and in the total loss of the industrial rights for which they fought so courageously in the past. Nor was there any sign, before the strike was called on February 16, that the industry itself could be expected to take any measures to arrest the decline which had already gone so far as to make the survival of the majority of the firms in the industry a matter of grave doubt.

For the present state of affairs the manner in which the trade is organized is as responsible as the depression itself. Always an industry of small, changing and irresponsible employers, it reverted, under the stress of unfavorable post-war conditions, to the uncivilized methods of doing business which had prevailed before the union was first organized. Seeking the easiest way out of a difficult situation, many established manufacturers and more new ones succumbed to the methods of cutthroat competition. They abandoned their own shops, farmed out their patterns and work to contractors employing on the average hardly more than ten persons in a shop; reduced costs of production ruthlessly by playing off one contractor against another. Through it all, and, consequently, to accept any responsibility for working conditions in shops which in reality manufacture their own product.

With these problems the union has struggled for more than ten years. The control it managed from time to time to establish has again been dissipated by the depression. From the beginning of 1930, the non-union area has spread; wages and prices have been further reduced; and all pretense at effective regulation has been virtually abandoned. After two years of depression some 26,000 workers, 70 percent of them women, were employed on miserable terms in more than 2,500 shops.

When the agreement between the union and the employers in the industry terminated at the end of last year, the latter entered the new negotiations with demands calculated to aggravate conditions already intolerable. They insisted upon additional wage cuts. They sought to increase the excessive unemployment of the waist-makers by demanding unlimited overtime without extra pay and unlimited work on Saturday, thus rejecting the practice of the equal division of work which, in this depression more than in any other, has been so universally urged upon American industry. Finally they undertook to destroy the remnants of union control by asking for the continuous right of free discharge and, what is worse, the right to discharge once a year 10 percent of the work force of each employer. With the employers holding such an attitude toward the problems of both the industry and the union, a strike designed to force fundamental reform was inevitable. In its counter demands the union proposed measures not alone essential to the barest requirements of labor but to minimum standards of prosperity for the industry itself. It is a high tribute to the courage and foresight of the dressmakers that, after years of starvation wages and the sufferings of unemployment, they were willing to face the added hardships of a strike for the purpose of reviving the power of their union and improving ever so little the conditions of themselves and their fellow workers, and that they have won even a partial victory, in these times, is an equal tribute to their solidarity and spirit.

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Chaos or Control

I. *Impotent Business*[1]

THE CHIEF characteristic of our civilization in recent years appears to be that it has been unmanageable. The enthusiast with a desire to mold affairs used to go into politics. But the disillusionment with politics, with political reform, even with democracy itself, has become so widespread that few first-rate men have entered public life, and those few have been largely ineffectual.

Our enthusiast turns from politics in disgust and decides to seek his millennium in economic action. He assumes that, in the words used by many business men and editors, "politics" and "economics" are distinct realms which are by nature separate and must be kept so. By contrast with the futility of politics, business is supposed to be noble and effective. Why not work directly in the sources of modern power, and exert a managing influence on civilization through industry?

If the citizen starts a small or even, nowadays, a moderate-sized business of his own, he is at once adrift in the stream of competition. Merely to survive as a business man, he must contrive shrewdly to make a profit—this absorbs his whole energy. With one hand braced against costs and the other against selling prices, he exercises the labors of Hercules to keep room for himself in the middle. There is little opportunity for control. The prices both of what he buys and of what he sells are subject to two kinds of outside influence. One is the action of the larger powers of business, who are always trying to get more for what they provide him or to take his trade away by selling for less. The other is the unpredictable resultant of vast economic forces which nobody fully understands. It may in one season bring him a windfall of profit by creating a remarkably wide spread between costs and prices, and may in another season squeeze him out entirely. These unpredictable and ungovernable forces he regards much as the native of central Africa regards the unexplained mysteries of nature. They are the action of gods, fetishes, demons. Mystic rites and medicine men may propitiate them. Coolidge was a good fetish, La Follette was a bad one. Protective tariffs and Republican administrations are the reliable form of propitiation. "Business economists," with their array of statistics, charts, "technical reactions" and "double bottoms," are the medicine men.

Nor is the small business man's activity one merely of trying to sell a standard, staple product. If he is not agile, he will wake up one morning and find there is no market any more for what he makes or deals in. Public taste is fickle; it demands changes in style and constant "improvements." He must try to guess what it is going to want, and alter his offerings accordingly. If his product is an engineering device, bought by other producing companies, what he makes may at any time be rendered obsolete by a new invention. Or the concerns to which he sells may lose the market for what they sell and so cease to want his product. Progress of this kind gives him a fair chance of success in the race, since it depends on sciences and arts which anyone may practise and which furnish criteria for judging what is an improvement and what is not. He may be the one to develop the better device. But "improvements" and changes desired by the ultimate consumer may be utterly irrational and selected according to no ascertainable criterion whatever. Are skirts to be short or long, and made of silk, cotton, wool or rayon? Which designs of women's shoes will be the rage? Will colonial furniture go out and modernistic come in? And if so, which kind of modernistic? What new disease is going to be invented and what sort of remedies is the public going to believe appropriate for it? Will people turn next year to Tom Thumb tennis or to marathon bridge? Will women want to keep kissable by smoking cigarettes or to win a husband by banishing "athlete's foot"?

About nine out of ten persons who start small businesses succumb to these hazards and fail. There is always a large number of such enterprises in existence, but the supply is kept abundant, not by a low death rate, but by a high birth rate. The species is like a kind of insect ephemera, the individuals of which live but a few hours. The opportunity for success as an independent proprietor is limited to a few. Those who fail of course do not exemplify the power of business. Those who succeed manage to keep going, not by producing an effect upon society, but by chance or by a shrewd process of adaptation. Whatever values they may find in success, these values do not include the satisfaction of exercising much control over the social environment.

More and more of the work of the world is being done by the large company. To become a successful executive, therefore, may look like a royal road to social effectiveness. But here again success is determined by an unmanaged complex of forces. To make a profit is the condition of remaining employed. To make as large a profit as possible is the condition of growth in income and power, for it is the condition of the expansion of the concern. But

[1] This is the first of a series of five articles, which are condensed and adapted from chapters in a forthcoming book, entitled "A Planned Society."

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this necessity, controlling the managements of individual companies which are not related to a balanced plan for society at large, creates confusion and waste which turn up obstacles to the very process of producing and selling goods and making profits.

Let us suppose that one has become a leader in the automobile industry. Even the larger concerns in this industry have been subject to the same kind of competitive hazards which harass the small enterprise. But let us suppose further that all these hazards had been jumped, and the concern with which one was connected had become successful and prosperous. Still one was faced by the following difficulties, among others:

> The chance that a major change in engineering, seized upon by a competitor, would make one's product obsolete.
>
> The chance that a lucky change in style by a competitor would swing the market to him, at least for a year or two.
>
> The virtual certainty that at some time or other, a time not capable of accurate prediction, the market at home for automobiles would cease expanding except by the growth of population, since everyone who could afford a car and could be made to want one, would have one. At that time, the industry, geared up to fill a rapidly expanding demand, would be overequipped to supply the slowly growing demand for replacements. This crisis, although foreseen, could not be prepared for by any individual concern, since that concern would always be pushing for maximum production in the hope of taking business from its competitors.
>
> The uncertainty of growth in the foreign market—an uncertainty created by all the same factors which operate in this country, plus obstacles raised by tariffs or political disturbances.
>
> The probable but unpredictable impact of general industrial depression, which drastically restricts popular purchasing power for pleasure vehicles and industrial purchasing power for trucks and buses.
>
> The dilemma created by the fact that although the need for a growing market for motor cars makes advisable a general policy of high and rising wages, the automobile manufacturer has no power over wages in other industries, and is even led to cut wages in his own factory by the never ceasing pressure for lower costs.
>
> The inroads into popular purchasing power made by a large amount of unemployment, occurring in times of "prosperity" as well as in times of depression.
>
> The hazards raised by fluctuation in prices of materials, making it uncertain how far in advance orders should be placed.

Here size is no safeguard against the misfortunes bred by a haphazard industrial system. The single big concern is almost as helpless before the task of managing society as is the little one. Even those few industries which approach monopoly do not escape the difficulties arising outside the industry itself. Competition is nowadays increasingly inter-industrial. One material may be substituted for another. The consuming public may prefer to spend more of its money for new kinds of goods and less for old. It would be difficult to pick an industry which has not experienced, or is not likely sometime to experience, one or more of the demons of overproduction, overcapacity, loss of foreign markets, reaction as a result of general depression, low wages of the buying public, unemployment or changing prices. It may not be surprising that supposedly backward and highly competitive industries like agriculture, bituminous coal mining or cotton textiles have trouble. But you can list the supposedly strong or the progressive industries, and hardly find one which is not subject to untoward chance. Not only automobiles, but copper, steel, railroads, oil, public utilities, chain stores, construction, radio, meat packing, chemicals—all share at one time or another, and in one way or another, in the common uncertainty. The picture of the strong and resourceful industrialist governing society, whether in his own interest or any other interest, is derived from fancy, not from fact.

Even the banker, who is supposed to be the very pillar of caution and safety, is subject to wholly unanticipated risks. The waves of bank failures which have swept the country in every severe depression, robbing millions of their deposits and savings, and restricting credit for whole communities for months at a time, are not due in the main to speculation, bad judgment or shady practices on the part of individual officials, in spite of the dramatic exceptions which have captured the public fancy. What is more traditionally safe and sound than real-estate mortgages? What banking or insurance executive could have been expected to foresee years ago that agriculture, the most basic of our industries, would become so impoverished that first mortgages on farms would be, as a rule, embarrassing to anyone who held them? Yet agricultural deflation has in the past few years wiped out hundreds of country banks entirely, and has forced many larger banks and insurance companies to take over uncounted square miles of land which they can neither sell nor operate profitably. Tremendous capital losses have occurred in this way—the facts are carefully guarded from the public because of fear of their effect upon confidence. Likewise many a bank has been more severely affected than its depositors ever have understood by the deflation of its mortgages on city real estate, its mortgage bonds and even its high-class industrial and railroad bonds. Information of this kind is not published; it is discussed only in whispers by those near enough the inside to know something of what is going on. It is one of the unexplored areas in our economic system. We do not know, at this writing, whether the losses are such that they can readily be written off, once an upturn in business comes, or whether they constitute a major menace hanging like a black thundercloud over the economic future of the country. But we do know that the bankers, as a group, are no more happily situated in respect to economic

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accidents than are the managers of any other industry.

What popular admiration has not been lavished on the industrialist has in large measure been bestowed upon his right-hand man, the technologist or the engineer. If these specialists cannot be said to exercise control and so to alter society and improve the conditions of life, who can? Their activities rest upon the discoveries of science concerning the nature of the universe and its constituent substances and forces. They combine these substances and forces in new and ingenious ways which apparently alter the face of the world. There is no question that their accomplishments are, in themselves, stirring. There is no question that these discoveries create the possibility of greatly enhanced human welfare. But nobody knows better than the more intelligent of these experts that what they do, thrown out into a chaotic society, often leads to untoward and unwanted consequences.

The agricultural experts discover ways to increase the yield of land and crops, and thereby cause untold poverty and hardship for farmers, who are led to produce so much that their crops cannot be sold for a fair price. (It may be answered that the crops might be sold if all the hungry had means to buy; nevertheless, the work of the agricultural experts does not bring this happy outcome any nearer.)

Architects and engineers collaborate to erect splendid monumental buildings whose spires trail the clouds—with the result that the real-estate market is depressed, city traffic is congested into a maelstrom of hurried and nervous and jostled individuals, and the already high prices of metropolitan land, which prevent decent housing for those with lower incomes, are still further boosted.

An inventor develops a highly ingenious new machine which turns out more product with less labor. What would be, in the abstract, more obviously desirable than more wealth with less work? Yet the result is that most of the wealth is concentrated in the hands of a few at one end of the economic scale, while the reduction of work is concentrated among the unemployed at the other.

The labor expert applies study of the workers' motions and makes records of the time in which they are done; he invents schemes of payment by results; all to the end of more efficient production. But the worker checkmates this effort by deliberately slowing his activity, prompted by the certain knowledge, which is derived from common experience, that if he produces too much and thus earns more than is considered a "fair wage," the rates of pay will be reduced and he will have to work harder for the same amount as before.

The expert in management improves the administration of the factory; he eliminates waste arising from lost time, clumsy handling of materials, lack of coördination among departments. He devises intricate accounting and cost-finding methods. He puts into use. The assumption is that we constitute a great economic democracy of consumers who

platform to the shipping department. Then he finds his carefully systematized unit limping along or shut down entirely, and his delicate machinery of control knocked into a cocked hat, by the impact of unplanned forces outside the factory, which decimate the market for its product.

A scientifically trained inventor of a basic improvement cannot find anyone to use it because it would compete with another product in which powerful interests have investments, while the quack inventor of a worthless concoction advertised as a patent medicine, and selling for many times the cost of production, makes a fortune before the public finds him out—if it ever does find him out.

The candid expert knows that he does not manage society in the general interest. What he does is to devote his experience to the services of someone trying to make a profit. That is quite a different thing. Whether his effort is baffled or successful, there is no assurance whatever that the ultimate outcome will be the sort of thing he would have set out to achieve if he had had any power over the end-result.

The spectacle of a great depression ought to be enough to convince anyone but the simple-minded that the exalted company of business men, bankers and engineers do not manage our society. To say that they do, to repeat after President Hoover and Mr. Coolidge that they are already engaged on a plan to enlarge production and abolish poverty, is also to say that they are responsible for unemployment, bankruptcies and all the crazy anomalies and sufferings of hard times. Do these gentlemen wish to accept so heavy a responsibility?

No one would contend that the army of workers exercises any appreciable management or power over affairs in America.

Two main outlets exist, in the absence of much satisfaction in the specific job, for the urge of the individual to count. One is to seek promotion for the sake of the influence it may give one in the world of work. But opportunity for promotion to any position that really seems high is closed to all but a few, and general recognition of this fact keeps it from being a common gateway for ambition. The other is to make headway in life outside the job. And this means more and more, in our commercial civilization, buying and displaying the goods made by others.

It is in consumption that the great public is thought to be supreme. Here powers of choice are supposed to be exercised, here satisfactions are supposed to be achieved. The whole industrial machine is, theoretically, adjusted by competition to serve not only the needs but the lightest whims of the consumer. Defenders of the existing regime habitually talk of the increasing numbers of automobiles, radios, bathtubs and electric refrigerators which it

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mail-order house, cast a vote which determines what shall be made and how much we will pay for it. The total pressure of these millions of daily votes is supposed to make the producing and distributing system serve our requirements to a greater extent every year.

Consumers themselves, however, show a shocking lack of appreciation for the benefits which are supposed thus to be conferred upon them. Clearly this picture of our consumer democracy is somewhat flattering. What are, briefly, some of its main defects?

The first defect is that almost everyone wants many more things than he has the money to buy. Eight to ten million unemployed, for instance, have recently been deprived of their economic franchise altogether, except in so far as it has been granted them by public and private charity. They cannot cast their votes for such elementary necessities as food and clothing. Even the average employed wage earner in times of prosperity cannot afford, in most large cities, a house with room enough for his family, space enough around it and ordinary sanitary improvements. He may, to be sure, have a radio or a second-hand automobile, but it does not follow that if he gave up these luxuries he could have a decent place in which to live. Cities simply do not provide such places in sufficient numbers at low enough prices. In the country and in smaller towns you will find more automobiles than bathtubs. As for electric refrigerators, they are still a rare luxury for the masses. We all are mentally loyal to the American ideal of a rising standard of living, but even the more prosperous of us have to clutch that standard by our finger nails as it rises.

This, you may say, is not the fault of our system, but merely the ineradicable tendency of childlike human beings to reach for the moon. We have more average wealth than any other country or any other generation. We cannot expect to have everything we want. We are by nature unsatisfied and always will be. But these assurances do not sound so assuring when they come hand in hand with the complaint of ninety-nine out of a hundred industries that they cannot sell all they can produce. There is too much wheat, too much copper, too much sugar, too much coffee, too much oil, too much coal, too much cotton, too much wool—and so on to the end of the list. Every industry is overequipped with plant and machinery, every one has a surplus of labor. It has become trite to say that our equipment and resources might produce at least twice as much for each of us as they do—if only there were a demand for the product. That means, demand backed up with enough hard cash.

The producers have done their best to make us want intensely everything they can turn out. They employ psychologists, artists, socially prominent writers of testimonials, pretty girl models, well trained salesmen, persistent canvassers and door-

wise be every view of mountain, lake or forest, in all our newspapers and magazines. The movies present endless pictures of luxurious living which tempt us to imitation. The advertisers play with devilish ingenuity on our sex instinct, our fear, our snobbishness, our love of color and display. Our desires for purchasable things are not a mere reaching for the moon; they are reaching for whole galaxies and constellations thrust constantly before our eyes with Neon tubes.

And we have responded with predictable scientific exactitude to these carefully calculated stimuli. We have wanted, or thought we wanted—which amounts to the same thing as far as the advertiser is concerned—almost every new thing that could be devised for sale. We have done our best to supply the cash which changes a want into a demand. We have spent all that our pay envelopes have afforded, and then have gone into debt to the tradesman and the instalment finance company, hoping to make more in the future by speculating in the stock market or winning advancement in our jobs or relying on the "high wage policy" of industry. Many of us, failing in the realization of these expectations, have either lost our credit, together with the less perishable goods which we have bought, or have paid, in the worry and struggle incident to the effort of meeting our obligations, ten times as much as our purchases were worth in permanent satisfaction. The noble consumer participating in a "rising standard of living" comes to resemble nothing so much as a donkey with a carrot before his nose wearily trotting on a treadmill. Our effort is tremendous, but, in terms of happier and fuller living, the faster we go, the more we remain in the same place.

Nor do we really choose the best and the cheapest of the goods presented for our approval. The variety of goods is so great, the possible places of purchase are so many, and our individual powers of testing are so elementary, that we seldom know whether we are getting the best of a group of competitive articles, or are paying too much for it, or indeed, in many cases, whether the article has any potency at all for the purpose advertised. The ignorance and the gullibility of the consumer are commonplaces among technical and advertising men. The result is that many profit-seeking producers are impelled not so much to offer us articles capable of superior service at a low price, as to devise products which can be sold quickly and in large quantities because they have surface qualities that they think we think we want. They are, in many cases, forced to be commercial demagogues who, like the political demagogues, appeal to the common impulses which come most easily to the surface rather than to the technical knowledge which we individually do not possess. At least, the conditions which determine commercial survival bring

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Consumer democracy does not work any better than political democracy. In both cases the real choices are made and the real powers exercised by the few professionals whose business it is to make profit or retain position by exploiting the public. But the nature of these choices and powers themselves is determined, for those who exercise them, not by any original or valid impulses they may have, but by unintelligent, unplanned and haphazard mass pressures. This condition affects the artist, the poet, the engineer, the architect and the manufacturer. In this process the sincere producer is often submerged, and the better product often gives way to the worse, in the supposed interest of consumers who themselves have little opportunity to manage or control the commercial realm in the interest of their own deepest satisfactions.

We have called the roster of those who, in different capacities, are sometimes believed to have powers to manage our civilization. Citizen, politician, small business man, industrial executive, technologist, banker, consumer—each has immediate faculties which turn out to be helpless in relation to the total complex of society. Specific objects can be accomplished, but only by the sacrifice of any attempt to give direction to the whole. Each of us snatches partial and temporary satisfactions, but the aimless drift of civilization entire thwarts each of us, some more seriously, some less. The vanity of the current efforts to manage, observed in one aspect or another by the more sensitive and intelligent, has led many of them to withdraw as far as possible from social effort, to regard society as something outside of and alien to themselves, to seek refuge from it, where more private satisfaction may be obtained.

But no one can withdraw far. Everyone must give hostages to the common life. It is therefore important to see whether there is any way out of the morass for all of us.

GEORGE SOULE.

The Second World War[1]

WE COME now to the third phase of the great world conflict which began in 1914 and lasted until 1940. The first phase was military, and terminated with the Armistice of November 11, 1918. There followed fourteen years during which the struggle was no less bitter, but was conducted in different terms. The so-called peace treaties signed during the following year were like most of the other peace treaties of history, in that they established grossly unjust settlements and sowed the seeds of new wars instead of liquidating the passions of the old one. The Allies remained in substantial control of the situation during this period, subject to the defection of Russia and the United States. As time passed, the chief material beneficiary of the peace treaties was seen to be France, which, with four satellite countries—Poland, Czechoslovakia, Rumania, Jugoslavia—assumed a dominating position in western Europe. After some years an opposing system of countries developed: Russia, Germany, Austria, Hungary, Italy. Decisive military, financial and economic power remained, however, in the hands of the French group. England went back to her traditional policy of standing in the middle and maintaining (for her own purposes) not the balance of power, which was all to one side, but at least a status quo which was not so bitterly unfair as the French would have wished to see.

In 1929 began a simultaneous series of depressions from various causes, worldwide except within Communist Russia. In some countries there were only two or three depressions going on together; in others there were as many as eight or ten, and in the latter instances the effects were correspondingly severe. The first results were a great weakening of the power and influence of Great Britain and the United States, and a corresponding increase in French strength (later counteracted as the French, also, suffered the results of economic partial paralysis).

In Japan, a radical movement had been growing for some years and had greatly alarmed the militarists, who were proportionately stronger there than in any other country. Late in 1931, taking advantage of the preoccupation of the Western world with domestic troubles, the Japanese decided upon a military adventure which would give an excuse to crush radicalism at home, conceal the economic catastrophe toward which the country was headed and carry out cherished ambitions on the Asiatic mainland. They therefore proceeded, in accordance with long prepared plans, to occupy Manchuria and set up a dummy government there. The Chinese responded, as usual, by restoring the boycott on Japanese goods, resulting in an immediate loss of two hundred million (gold) yen and a continuing loss of staggering proportions. The Japanese thereupon sent warships and troops to Shanghai, believing that, beginning with this city, they could without difficulty occupy all the important ports of China and force upon her another peace treaty even more humiliating than that of 1895. The Chinese, however, proved unexpectedly stubborn in resistance, and for some months the Japanese were checkmated outside Shanghai.

[1] From the summary chapter in "The History of the Nineteen-thirties," published September, 1945, by the United States Book

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terribly difficult situation. It was obviously powerless to stop this war [2] and yet the whole theory on which it was based was that there should in the future be no resort to hostilities until its elaborate machinery of mediation and conciliation had been exhausted. In its paper constitution, provisions had been made for exerting upon belligerents international pressure, both economic and military; but the unreality of these provisions had been quickly perceived and they had remained a dead letter, particularly since the strongest Power in the world, the United States, had refused to join the League or, in its early years, to coöperate with any but its harmless social-service activities.

In this crisis, while thousands of Chinese were being slaughtered by Japanese guns, numerous well meaning idealists came forward in several countries, but mostly in the United States, to demand economic pressure upon Japan by means of a boycott. It was argued that suspension of trade with her would bring her to her knees in a few weeks' time because of the economic debacle which would ensue. The governments of the chief Powers were at first extremely reluctant to entertain this idea. The British and French were strongly pro-Japanese for a variety of reasons; the Italians feared that a precedent might be created which could be used against them; the American government was unfavorable chiefly because President Herbert Hoover feared Congress would refuse its consent on the ground that George Washington had not advocated boycotts. Presently, however, popular pressure became irresistible. Thousands of petitions were circulated in all countries, and millions of signatures were appended. The press leaped to the support of such a popular movement.

Finally, Washington became convinced that the League would support an American boycott, at the same moment that Geneva decided America would support a League boycott. On May 23, 1932, Mr. Hoover appeared before a joint session of Congress and, while the whole nation listened in on a joint Columbia-N. B. C. radio hook-up, asked for a boycott resolution, which was voted *vive voce* and among scenes of great enthusiasm, with only a handful of progressive Senators and Representatives registering their disapproval. On the same day, the League Assembly in special session at Geneva took similar action, and the Japanese delegate, controlling deep emotion with difficulty, announced, on instructions from his government, that it served notice of its desire to withdraw from the League as soon as the formalities permitted.

The news was received in Japan amid demonstrations of profound excitement and patriotic exhilaration. Cheering throngs surged through the streets of all the great cities; a number of foreigners were mobbed, and barely escaped with their lives. Popular sentiment demanded that Japan at once declare war upon all other countries except Russia (which refused to coöperate in the boycott) and a large group in the Diet favored this action; but the government sternly suppressed this tendency, pointing out the folly of such a course, and insisting that Japan was, and had been throughout, the innocent party both in Manchuria and in China proper.

Within the next few days, all the countries which had maintained diplomatic relations with Japan severed them and ordered their representatives home. It had previously been argued that it was possible to have a boycott without severance of relations, and vice versa, but in the passion of the moment, these distinctions broke down. Trading with Japan was outlawed universally. Japanese credits in foreign banks were sequestrated; Japanese securities were not permitted to be officially quoted on the stock exchanges, and bootleg markets were established behind closed doors, where they were sold at rapidly decreasing prices. Inside Japan, there were several days of near panic. The stock exchanges were closed by government order, but in unofficial trading, prices went down severely. The fall was less than financial experts had predicted, however, and it was soon discovered that the yen was itself falling (Japan had gone off the gold standard six months earlier), though the absence of foreign-money quotations had concealed this fact. There was much food-hoarding, and under emergency laws many people were arrested for this.

The hysteria, however, lasted only a few days. It was quickly pointed out that only one-twenty-fifth of Japan's food came from abroad, that she raised 91 percent of her own rice, that only one-half of the soya beans imported from Manchuria were used for food, and that there was no danger of starvation for a long time to come. While it was true that she needed minerals from abroad, her accumulated stocks of these were such that there was no immediate danger. Her textile trade was prostrated by the loss of the raw cotton which constituted nearly a third of all her imports; and she was heavily injured by the loss of her silk exports to America, which were a half of all her outward-bound commerce. This situation was partly alleviated, however, by a simple device: instead of importing cotton and exporting silk, she began using silk at home, under government control, which enormously reduced its price.

An almost complete state socialism was at once introduced in Japan. The country's entire wealth, so far as possible, was confiscated. All foodstuffs were seized and rationed; all unessential industry prohibited. The Western world found, as it might have had intelligence enough to anticipate, that the effect upon Japan of a boycott was just the opposite of what cocksure theorists had expected. Instead of giving way under pressure, its inhabitants did what the people of all countries always do in such circumstances: they resisted all the harder. The grave suffering caused by the action of the Powers simply incited them to greater acts of patriotic sacrifice.

The boycott presently settled down into a stale-

[2] There was no formal declaration of war on either side until

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mate which dragged along for many months. The Allies, having refused to declare war, could not interfere with Japanese military operations in China, and despite the enormous difficulties of the Japanese position, these were gradually more successful, until the invaders dominated most of the eastern littoral.

Then came the crucial decision. Since Japan was still drawing supplies from Manchuria, it was decided that the boycott could only be effective if accompanied by an embargo and a blockade. The British and American fleets were ordered to cooperate in patrolling the Japanese coastal waters for this purpose, although naval experts said flatly that this was almost impossible in view of the distance of Singapore, the naval base used in the joint operations. Before any serious military attempt was possible, however, the infuriated Japanese responded by declaring war on all of the chief Powers except Russia; and these Powers, in paroxysms of patriotism, responded in kind. At first, these declarations made little real difference, but early in 1933 came the events which precipitated the general catastrophe. Japan, with her back to the wall, exerted every effort to make an alliance with Russia. She pictured to the Soviet leaders the capitalistic powers seeking to crush Japan only as a preliminary to their great assault upon the first Socialist Republic. The Russians, who had long believed in such a development, had their fears confirmed, as they thought, by incautious utterances of the French leaders. They joined hands with Japan for mutual defense—and the scene of the war promptly shifted to western Europe. In Germany, where the Hitlerites (National Socialists) had come into power late in 1932, a chance was seen to throw off the hateful French yoke, and an incongruous alliance was made among German chauvinists, Russian Communists and Japanese militarists. The declarations of war came within a few hours of each other, France and her allies against Germany, Austria, Hungary and Russia. To the surprise of many persons, Mussolini performed the old Italian trick and held aloof until he could see which way the war was going. The British and Americans also stood aloof, although hatred of the French caused a strong party in England to seek to enter the war on Germany's side, ignoring the Russian aspect.

The horrors of this great conflict, in the so recent past, are too near to my readers to require description in detail. It is sufficient to say that all the forbidden forms of warfare were utilized; all the new inventions which had been worked out since the last active struggle (1914-18) were employed. The cities of Europe, bombed from the air, became an unspeakable desolation. Civilians were killed in much greater numbers than soldiers. Economic paralysis, which was already far advanced when the war began, soon became so complete that all the orderly processes of civilization were suspended. Despite the humanitarian efforts of citizens in those parts of the world which were not ravaged by the war, millions of people in many lands died of starvation-induced diseases, were swept away in epidemics which their exhaustion could not withstand, or perished of exposure when all the dwellings in large areas were rendered uninhabitable by military operations.

It is a testimonial to the endurance of mankind that this conflict continued for seven years before it was brought to an end. The series of Communist revolutions began in Germany, and swept through the other chief countries in the following order: Austria, Hungary, Japan, Italy, France, the United States and Great Britain. It was not until August 12, 1940, that the convention of Paris was held to celebrate the fact that workers' republics had now been established in every important country in the world, and that peace had been restored. The ten-year plan for the world, sketched out at that conference, is now in its fourth year of achievement, and I regret to report that in several of its important schedules it is running badly behind the quotas set. The Lausanne conference of October next is to be devoted to considering these deficiencies, and devising means to repair them. BRUCE BLIVEN.

Why, Dr. Einstein!

A YOUNG woman has been appearing at Warner Brothers' Theatre, in Hollywood, California, about whom there is an unusual fact. She is a professional prophet; her name is Gene Dennis; and the unusual fact referred to is that she appears before the Hollywoodenheads with the endorsement of Professor Albert Einstein.

According to Upton Sinclair, Professor Einstein has long been concerned with psychic matters and has done some investigation in the field. When, therefore, he encountered Miss Dennis while weekending at Palm Springs (a desert rest place patronized by tired Hollywood Intellects) he was furiously interested. Miss Dennis disclaims all connection with clairvoyance, fortune-telling, mind-reading and crystal-gazing. All she claims is an ability to foretell the future. She can tell you whether you are going to sell your property; whether you are going to make a success in your profession; or where your wife happens to be, if she has run away and assuming that you are interested. Theatre employees transmit your questions and all you have to do is stand up. Miss Dennis is not solemn. She has a sense of humor and uses it. But she believes in herself sufficiently to tell you what you want to know and to believe that she is telling the truth.

Gene Davis has faith in auras. She announced to the press: "Dr. Einstein is indeed the most remarkable personality I have ever contacted. [Sic.] And his aura is just sublime—pure blue electric sparks, instead of color. It was just like talking to God." At the same time Dr. Einstein said: "She told me things no one possibly could know, things on which I have been working, and she demonstrated to me that she has a power to do things

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I cannot at this time explain. Now, I must tell some of my associates about this. It was miraculous indeed."

Wonderful! Wonderful! And so the scientific method goes crashing to the ground and the world's greatest relativist becomes an endorser of a "psychic" vaudeville act. He joins hands with the late Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, who exclaimed that Gene Dennis was "the eighth wonder of the world!"

Insufficient attention has been paid to the astounding metamorphosis Dr. Einstein has undergone since he first made a visit to America. Then he was a retiring, diffident, charming man who commanded the respect of all and sundry. Now he is the tamest lion in the intellectual zoo. He goes everywhere. He attends picture openings with the regularity and aplomb of Clark Gable. He is at all the public dinners. "A year ago," runs a newspaper comment, "when Einstein first came to Pasadena to study his famous theory of relativity in the light of the latest astronomic discoveries, he was 'camera shy,' although he was to become one of the most photographed celebrities who ever visited California." He is in a fair way to be known as a "camera mad" celebrity. His place as a publicity-shy celebrity has been taken by Greta Garbo.

His latest exploit raises serious questions. Anyone who has visited California is astounded by the openness with which superstition flourishes and the prodigality with which those who trade upon it are rewarded. The California public certainly does not need any spectacular endorsement to induce belief in the activities of a well billed vaudevillian like Gene Dennis. Into this situation, where disposition to belief is general and disposition to doubt exceptional, Dr. Einstein precipitated himself and gave his enormous prestige to the side which, if it needs any attention at all from celebrities, needs to be subjected to corrosive skepticism. To be sure, a careful study of his words, as reported in the press, will show that he did not by any means give Gene Dennis a complete endorsement. But it is my firm belief that in any argument about the correctness of her "guesses," Einstein's august name will be invoked to support her claims to supernatural powers. Worse, his name will be invoked, by thousands who never gave him a serious thought before, to justify their belief in all sorts of idiotic adepts at the hocus-pocus of card-reading, crystal-gazing, mind-reading, etc., who flourish so magnificently in the California atmosphere. Instead of coming to the support of what is sane and rational *consistently and always,* in harmony with his position as a great scientist, he has here made a tremendous and, in all probability, resounding contribution to the success of superstition.

The situation raises the much debated question about the worth of the scientific method as a mental discipline. We have seen our scientists, no matter [illegible] themselves time and again as utterly "hopeless" once they step outside their narrow specialties. The physicists, particularly, have been guilty of all sorts of strange and weird conduct. We need not concentrate our fire on Dr. Einstein. We can cite the vagaries of Drs. Eddington, Jeans and Whitehead. And then there is Dr. Einstein's colleague in California, the famous Dr. Robert A. Millikan. But even Millikan hasn't endorsed any vaudeville actors yet.

It's a mad world, God knows. And it gets madder and madder. Gene Dennis and Dr. Einstein go blithely tripping along together. Why, Dr. Einstein!

Miss Dennis' latest revelations will save many people a lot of worry and effort and I feel bound to give them all the publicity I can. She says that Governor James Rolph, Jr., will be in the White House in 1937 and that prosperity is just around the corner.

C. Hartley Grattan.

Hollywood, California.

Washington Notes

Tweedledum and Tweedledee—A Program in Search of a Party—Bull Market in Hoover—The Wet Issue

DEMOCRATIC politicans—leaders, sub-leaders, publicity directors, candidates, near candidates and party "advisers"—here and in the country generally are so engrossed and absorbed at the moment in the ferocious struggle over their presidential nomination that trivial matters such as principles, policies and issues receive scant attention. However, there are a few here in Washington who are getting just a little concerned over the situation and are giving some thought to the matter—not, I might add, with a very marked degree of success. Nevertheless, suspicion does occasionally arise that perhaps there is some slight risk in blithely assuming that any Democrat can beat Hoover, with or without a platform, that it is not necessary to have an issue or a program or an appeal; and that all it is necessary to do is to sit tight.

Perhaps that theory is soundly based. Perhaps the unpopularity of the President is so pronounced that it will be unnecessary to do anything save put up the ticket and assail the administration. It has certainly looked that way. Nevertheless, certain developments during the past few weeks have caused some of the more intelligent party leaders to wonder whether after all a party with nothing to offer in any way different from the party in power can hope to win solely on the basis of popular resentment, unless it presents a candidate with a personality so strong and a record so bright that nothing else is required.

There seems to be no such candidate available on the Democratic side. With the nomination of Smith concededly out of the question, I cannot think of a single man so far mentioned who is capable of thrilling the voters with his personality. Baker could not, Ritchie could not, Roosevelt, Garner, Cox, could not. Who else is there? The Democrats are bound to nominate one of them.

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In the absence of one of those rare and thrilling figures, such as Bryan or Wilson or Roosevelt, there are those who believe that something more than a fierce denunciation of Hoover's sins of omission and commission, something more than platitudinous promises and declarations of devotion to the interests of labor, industry, capital and agriculture, may be needed. This conviction has been strengthened by the slight rise in Hoover's stock noted here and in other sections. Of course Mr. Hoover was at so low an ebb in popular esteem that any change at all meant an advance. He simply could not go back. However, there has been a little change.

I think this is partly due to Hoover's three most recent and conspicuous appointments—Dawes for the Reconstruction Finance Board, Mellon for the London post and Cardozo for the Supreme Court. It is generally conceded that the appointment of Dawes was smart politics. For one thing, it elicited from the colorful general a warm-hearted and whole-souled endorsement of Hoover for renomination and reëlection, thus halting abruptly all talk of his running against Hoover. The selection of Mellon operated beneficently in two ways. First, it stopped the embarrassing and annoying attacks upon the Treasury head that were becoming increasingly violent in both House and Senate. Second, it got Mr. Mellon out of the Cabinet, where everybody was beginning to recognize him as a figurehead, and put in as Secretary of the Treasury a man who can really function and who actually has done the work.

As for Cardozo's appointment, that was good politics because it was good public service. Then, too, the administration's success in getting Senator Carter Glass to abandon that first great sweeping financial bill of his, which frightened the big bankers in New York almost to the point of prostration, and to accept the credit bill planned by the administration, was quite a feat. Its ensuing passage shot the stock market up and inspired no small hope—which still exists—that perhaps the depression is lifting a little.

So, all in all, I think it fair to say that the much denounced Hoover is in slightly better shape now than he was a few weeks ago. The theory that anyone can beat him is still pretty widely held, but there are some who are not so sure now as they were. That is the reason the more thoughtful Democrats are a little worried over the failure of the party to develop at this session anything in the shape of a genuine party program. Perhaps it was not in the wood, but at any rate they have not done it. Up to date we have had the spectacle of the Democratic party in House and Senate voting with almost complete solidarity in favor of—and passing—one Hoover recommendation after the other, and doing it with only periodical outbursts of criticism. A majority of the Democrats in the Senate even voted with the administration against the La Follette relief bill, thus making their score of administration cooperation practically perfect.

"Now then," say the aforesaid thoughtful Democrats, "it is all very well to have an open convention so that we may select our best available candidate, but when we get him, what reasons, aside from negative ones, are we going to advance for electing him?" It is rather a puzzling question. There certainly has developed among the Democrats no policy on tariff, taxes, agriculture, labor, foreign affairs or social betterment which is in any way distinctive or concrete. Such being the case, it is argued that should economic conditions improve between now and October, the Democratic party would lose much of its present advantage. About all it could say to the voters would be that it had coöperated with Hoover by passing the bills designed to promote the recovery of business, stabilize the banks, release credit and restore public confidence. The plain fact is that the Democratic party is at heart just as conservative and just as devoid of forward-looking plans as its opponent.

Its leadership has shown far less sympathy with the progressive program at this session than in the last, and the reason is easy to understand. The Democratic managers are deeply afraid of offending or affrighting the so-called big-business interests of the East, which have in the past always supported the Republican ticket, but which have in the last three years become thoroughly sick of Hoover. This, they think, is their chance to swing these potent influences over to the Democratic side, for without their support success is impossible. Incidentally, this accounts for much of the opposition in the East to Roosevelt.

The result of all this is that the Democrats are left without a program. There seems no possibility of getting an issue unless they make it out of prohibition. That is the one best bet, and one on which the party relies. The more the Democratic situation is studied the more clearly it seems that its only real issue can be the repeal of the Eighteenth Amendment.

Some time ago it seemed to me that a straddle on the liquor question was unavoidable in both conventions. I rather think now that not only will a Wet candidate be nominated, but that a Wet declaration will find its way into the Democratic platform. Certainly it would be the most appealing issue that could be made in the states whose electoral votes are needed to win. Moreover, I think that the increase in Wet sentiment in the South, recently revealed in various ways, makes it seem much more likely that the South will yield to a platform declaration than it seemed six months ago.

As the weeks roll by, the fight on Roosevelt spreads. Hearst and McAdoo—a strange, incongruous combination—join forces against him in California, which seemed a while ago to be surely and solidly for him. Contests loom in various Western states previously counted in the Roosevelt column. The impression gains that he will be beaten, and if so it is inevitable that the candidate will be a conservative whose economic policies are essentially the same as Mr. Hoover's. Not one of the conservatives available is of a type capable of stirring the people deeply. What, then, of the prospects of a minority party which hasn't an issue, provided business improves and popular resentment abates, as it would? It is no wonder that when they stop to think as some of them sometimes do—our Democratic wise men have some slight apprehension that things may not be in November as they are in March.

T. R. B.

Washington.

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Town Notes

IT IS NO news that Mr. John Van Druten's play at the Empire is a delightful event and a success. "There's Always Juliet" goes surely through its lightly undertaken design; its tone, so far as I could see, was unbroken, an achievement in itself more profound than most of us ever guess; and the depth and detail of the characters and motivations were accurately gauged to the needs of the piece and to maintaining its even plane. So also has the good acting been noted. Miss Edna Best and Mr. Herbert Marshall play together for every value possible to the scene, all the timing, the nuance, the give and take. They are another of those stage married couples who of late have been reviving an old tradition, reminiscent of the days when the great roaring teams of Mr. and Mrs. This and That went over the country in Shakespeare, Bulwer Lytton and other more domestic repertory.

These two English actors are not among those who have been joined together only to the ruin of one or the other, but rather for the perfecting of their method. A married alliance between the two leading players in a drama, besides allowing diverse pattings, probings, demonstrations and kisses that might alarm certain members of the audience in actors who are unwed, allows also, or can allow, a chance for thinking and working together, a friendly response, generosity, advice and opportunity mutually granted. This entirely correct household association is about the only manner in which our actors can work together in anything that approaches the old days. In the old days of the theatre, players lived mostly in attics and gutters and under the law were vagabonds—a truly good state for art very likely, whatever the profession's own choice in the matter might be. But nowadays, what with the leading lady at a tea somewhere on Park Avenue and the leading man speaking at a hotel luncheon or out with his golf, and both impressed with the social and with bonds and what-not, most of the association is merely on the rehearsal stage, a lot of people half-dead, or strained of their vitality, willing but sketchy, and as anxious as the manager and director to find the shortcut as soon as possible.

Esthetically there is an interesting point about this performance of Mr. and Mrs. Marshall. They are as stage figures not very glamorous, a very modest charm on either side, and what I should call only a mild degree of beauty or of that quality of the *soigné* that, seen none too often, yet does no harm to society plays. What the audience of "There's Always Juliet" enjoys, sitting so quietly as to hear a pin drop all through the evening, comes down ultimately to almost a pure esthetic instance. The story counts somewhat, of course, and the stage figures and actors. But a real source of pleasure lies in the play's evenness of plane and motivation; and what keeps so many people so intent on the playing is often its time and tone qualities, the fresh and close surprise of perfected responses, of the cueing and such other aspects as imply the conversion of the scene's content into pure acting terms. This is a more elusive matter than it would be in arts like music or painting, because of the actor's presence and personality to cloud the [illegible] the player that engages us, which of course he does to some extent, or the deliciousness with which the cue is taken and the whole scene modulated.

Apart from all the other sides of "Face the Music" and "Of Thee I Sing," the praise of them, and their success, it is worth while noting again this increasing Aristophanic trend in our musical-comedy writing, this go at the semi-rotten fantasy, semi-innocence and somewhat hard ebullience of American life, as expressed particularly in the fields of the political, national and municipal. The politicians, ambassadors and so on in one of these plays, and in the other the policemen with their tin boxes, as representing the only people untouched by the depression, make wholesome, important and laughing theatre. Mr. Kaufman, as an example of author or director of the libretto as the case may be, in such pieces, has become one of our best showmen.

Mr. Kaufman, that is, knows how to try out this line, this joke, this effect, to see what the audience does about it, to keep it, mend it or cut it out accordingly; he is able and willing to feel his way along the line of appeal and sure fire. In fact, he is one of those theatre men who might be said to be in agony until he sees whether a thing goes over those perilous footlights or not; and there have been times in the past when he was plainly less concerned with what he said than with how it went; he was not so much set, with all the profound force of his own self, toward his own conclusion or remark, as he was anxious to get past the barriers of the audience's coolness into a successful applause.

This instinct, for trying things out with an eye on the moment's stage success, for registering a horror of going flat, belongs to a good sound child of the theatre, who knows what its dangers are and its curious hard discipline, and what an upbubbling response means as it draws out the lively heart of the audience and stage event. But it can also bring on timidity and insignificant fright, and so prevent the playwright's saying what he may most want to say. Important dramatists run in both these directions: the right terror lest the things fail to come off as theatre and the will to make the point or burst. There are those who think even now that "Of Thee I Sing" lacks in its second half quite the weight of what the first has set going. Theatrically this may be a relief, avoiding too much insistence and hard hitting; dramatically and personally, as regards the author, it may be either a lack of conclusions or of the pressure within himself of their necessity to be said. This fault, I think, could certainly not be laid on the second and newer of these pieces, "Face the Music." By a perfect ingenuity the business of municipal rottenness and prosperity, rounded up in the first three-fourths of the story, sags a minute into disaster and then reappears in a new guise: the whole city racket is being put over as a show, rottener and more general and safely joyous than ever. The story's end carries the farce of it still further into extravagance, but clinches the satire with a brass-band burst. In all satire it is the sum of the whole, the conclusion most of all, that delivers the hilarious blow, as distinguished from mere antics, and creates the fable, as distinguished from mere jokes.

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Readers of Mr. Thomas Craven's "Men of Art" a year ago may remember that in his scheme of treating great artists as personalities, arriving by that road at some estimate of their work, he sent off Titian with somewhat shrunken credentials. One limitation at least in Mr. Craven's essay cannot be denied: in speaking of Titian's character and Aretino's influence, the courting of the great, wrenching the fruits of patronage from them, and so forth, he isolates too much one single artist from his time. You might as well launch forth at Sardanapalus for having many wives and as many couches, as if everybody else in his epoch rested with one wife only in an iron bed. But dropping that point, we may note a far more serious limitation in Mr. Craven's account esthetically: the picture of Titian painting all that noble repose and golden beauty into his portraits as a means of pleasing the sitters. The gap in such a remark ought to be clear enough. No matter how much you may wish to paint magnificent poise and harmony, beauty et cetera, you cannot do it merely by an intention of shrewd policy. You must first have these things in your own art and soul; the important point is the sheer presence of these qualities in Titian's painting.

Certainly the Titian lately come to these shores by way of Duveen Brothers, trails with it a golden perfection from the Renaissance, the Renaissance in Venice, arriving there later than in Rome and Florence, more richly, too, less strictly, more easily if less austerely consummate in a rapid flowering. It measures in inches something like sixty-five by eighty-two. The subject is a recumbent Venus and a young man with a lute. Venus lies on the right, the young man on the left sits at her feet. She looks toward us, he is seen in profile, his eyes on her. The place is a balcony, beyond which spreads a landscape of fields, mountains, a lake, a white castle, glowing clouds, trees. From many of its aspects this painting would seem to be late; it belongs very likely somewhere after the middle of the century, when the painter was in his seventies and still far from his death at ninety-nine.

This picture of Venus and the lute player only now brought into view, even for scholars it seems, is obviously reminiscent of the recumbent Venuses in the Prado, the Dresden gallery, the Hermitage, the Uffizi, London and elsewhere, and appears to be the original from which the Cambridge Venus, long pronounced a copy or school work, of course, appears to have been taken. To my taste the most beautiful of all these are the two with Venus and the young man at the organ, in the Prado. One of them I have sometimes taken, not as the greatest, but at least as my favorite picture anywhere. That degree of excitement has passed for me, but I should still say that the earlier treatment has something of a certain style or grand chic or lyric jealousy of beauty and passion that this later picture lacks. At the same time this Duveen Venus is a fuller, greater and more as it were outrageously rich and astonishing painting. In the figure and in the head this Venus is more beautiful than any other of Titian's; certainly the head is far more beautiful. In the Prado picture, the head of the young man, supposed to be Philip II and certainly like the Titian portraits of Philip, is finer than this young man with the lute; the figure and color of the Duveen young man excel the other. The landscape that fills [illegible] yond the dark balcony line is, as painting, all that the Flemish artists of the next century did, plus more glow and luminosity, and is as modern, or whatever you call it, as landscape in Renoir, plus the glories of poetic meaning and of the last avenues of harmony and harmonious spirit. The whole picture is tied into one with the theme of music. In Venus' left hand is a flute, not for the moment played; the shepherds in the wood dance to the pipes, and throughout the landscape every figure is concerned with music. Music authenticates the young man's dream and gives the right abstraction to the body of love and beauty at whose feet he sits playing on his lute.

All this leaves out of account that dazzle of the brush, the color and the overpainting. STARK YOUNG.

The Biography of a Strike

"MILL SHADOWS," written by Tom Tippett and produced by the students of Brookwood Labor College, is a chronicle play of the textile strike at Marion, North Carolina. It was recently played in New York City, at the New School for Social Research; it will be played again on the evening of March 19 at the Labor Temple on East Eighty-fourth Street. It is chiefly important as a step toward the new theatre of labor; indeed, as the program states, it is "probably the most authentic American labor play."

It has no love interest; it has no hero except the strike itself, of which it is a complete biography. We are shown, first of all, the conditions that produced the strike: twelve hours' work a day, nine dollars earned each week, life in a mill village walled out from the rest of mankind and, added to all this, the stretch-out system—"stretch out a little on the right to tend a few more looms, stretch out a little on the left, stretch till you're all stretched out of human shape." We are shown the first enthusiasm of the strike, the first feeling of mass power among the individually powerless; then the first defeat, when troops are brought into Marion and the workers surrender to the manufacturer, though still retaining their union; then, in the third act, the treachery of the superintendent, resulting in a second walk-out and the massacre of six strike-leaders at the gates of the mill.

The play is successful in that it holds the interest of the spectators, rouses them to sympathy, impels them to make generous gifts; and yet it reveals several hesitations in the playwright's mind. For whom is the play intended —for the trained apostles of labor at Brookwood, for the kindly liberals who applauded its performance at the New School, or for the workers themselves? Obviously the author has tried to write for all these audiences, and has therefore introduced passages into his play which subtract a little from its appeal to each of them. A second conflict has to do with the justification for an unsuccessful strike. At the end the workers are defeated, blacklisted at the mill, evicted from their houses; yet the author would like to show that they have gained something tangible at the cost of all this dogged fighting, this sacrifice of lives. The doubt in his mind produces unsatisfying speeches, qualified messages of hope, unity and defiance.

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outlaws, burn the mill, shoot down the superintendent and the sheriff, die fighting with rifles in their hands? Again the author is not quite certain. He has helped to conduct a peaceful strike, has seen it suppressed with treachery and bloodshed; now, as he dramatizes these experiences, his favorite character is an old mountain woman who believes that "the law is always agin poor people" and that poor people have to use force against force. It is as if he were saying to the audience, "I wonder—is the old woman right after all?" MALCOLM COWLEY.

Harriet Converse Moody

AMERICAN poets and American poetry lost one of their staunchest friends when the widow of William Vaughn Moody died in Chicago on February 22. Few other American women can have functioned as liberally and intelligently as she, in encouraging, not poets alone, but followers of all the kindred arts.

Hundreds of people actually felt themselves at home in that house at 2970 Ellis Avenue which belonged no more to Chicago than to the world at large. An American practitioner of any art was likely to be a guest there sooner or later, and it may almost be said that an English writer had only to cross the Atlantic in order to find himself headed for that hospitable shelter. You might meet Masefield at those informal nightly gatherings; or Walter de la Mare, or Robert Nichols, or Rabindranath Tagore, or Padraic Colum, or James Stephens; or Yeats, in the early days. And among her American close friends and frequent guests you would notice Edwin Arlington Robinson, Percy MacKaye and Daniel Gregory Mason the composer, as well as Robert Frost, Vachel Lindsay, Edna St. Vincent Millay, Witter Bynner, Zona Gale, "H. D.," Lola Ridge and the group of Chicago poets headed by Carl Sandburg and Edgar Lee Masters.

But it would be a serious mistake to class Harriet Moody as a deliberate collector of celebrities. The truth was that her own personality demanded its suitable food, her mind its material for fair exchange, her heart the vessels for its overflow. And she had an amazing flair for perceiving and singling out among multitudes of human beings, those who interested her or who needed her friendship—which among all her givings was the gift she offered most lavishly.

A guest arriving for the first time, noting the informality of the household, might possibly expect to relax there. Coming down to the drawing-room on his first evening, and facing his hostess on the celebrated swinging seat where nightly she rather regally established herself, he would shortly change his mind. Informality of dress, manner, speech—all that was tolerated. But no guest could produce his second or third-best intellectual furnishings without detection and challenge. This woman would do all for you that one human being could do for another, but she would not accept your evasions and insincerities.

Individual as this home of hers was, Mrs. Moody was independent of it and of all material scenes and conditions. When she traveled, as she frequently did, to New York or [illegible] to California, she took her own atmosphere characteristic salon, nobody could explain how, was in full operation. After her husband's death, in 1910, Mrs. Moody retained the apartment at 107 Waverly Place, New York, which Moody had never relinquished and where he had written his prose plays. Her unfulfilled wish was to make this spot a permanent home for poets and a center of poetic life. As a matter of fact, it was occupied for years by a succession of poet friends and was intermittently, during her own presence there, the scene of the vivid life that she had the gift of instantly summoning.

To express Harriet Moody's degree of interest in promising artists with small incomes, as well as in lame ducks with no incomes at all, fairly substantial resources are obviously necessary. A young high-school teacher in Chicago, she felt a strong desire to do more for her invalid mother than her salary permitted. Having a knack for cooking, she made some irresistible gingerbread, sold it and received orders for more. Out of this episode there developed the Home Delicacies Association, a catering enterprise which, under its founder's immediate direction, throve mightily for many years, not through the policy of petty economy that is sometimes supposed to be necessary in trade, but through the sheer excellence of its products. Several generations of poets and artists have good reason to rejoice that the original gingerbread turned out so well.

Only Chicagoans, and doubtless few of those, could guess how much she did, day after day and year after year, for Chicago's promising young artists: how she sensitively perceived their existence, in the first place, gave them her friendship, her stimulus, and, when they needed it, substantial aid. And, of course, warmly welcomed them to the infinitely elastic hospitality of her home. Mrs. Moody believed in Glenway Wescott before he had written a novel. She detached Hart Crane, at the age of sixteen, from an uncongenial environment, and encouraged him to produce poetry. She helped the sculptor, Alfeo Faggi, among many others, to find his public: and she promoted many such careers as those of the young composers Henry Cowell and Harold Triggs. It is perhaps by youth that she will be most missed. RIDGELY TORRENCE.

The Bridegroom

A LITTLE while ago Yegorka Bassoff got married. He took himself for a wife a woman of sound health and a heavy jaw, weighing at least five pood. In a word, the man had luck. Before that Yegorka Bassoff was a widower for three years, for no one would have him. He proposed to everybody, even to the soldier's lame widow from Mestechko. This affair broke down because of a trifle.

Of this proposal Yegorka loved to talk. Thereby he lied endlessly, every time adding some new and remarkable detail. All the village knew the story by heart, but never missed an occasion to ask Yegorka to tell them again, shaking with laughter beforehand.

"How was it, then, Yegorka, that you proposed?" asked the men, winking at each other.

"I just put my foot into it," said Yegorka.

"You probably hurried the affair too much."

"The season, you see, was a hot one. Time for mow-

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my wife dies. Say today she falls ill. Tomorrow she feels worse, tosses and raves and falls off the stove.

" 'Thank you,' I say, 'Katerina Vassilyevna; you are cutting me without a knife. At a wrong time you choose to die. Wait till the fall,' I tell her, 'and then die,' but she won't listen to me.

"Then, of course, I called in the medical man. For a pood of barley. He pours the barley into his sack and then says, 'Medicine is powerless to undertake anything in this case. Our baba will have to die.'

" 'From what illness?' I ask him. 'Excuse my indelicate question.'

" 'All of this,' he says, 'is unknown to medicine.'

"At any rate he gave me some pills and then left.

"We put the pills behind the ikons—but it did no good. My baba tosses and raves and falls off the stove. Towards night she died.

"I cried, of course. What a time, I think. Here is the season for mowing and reaping. Unthinkable without a woman. What shall I do? Get married? But who will marry me? Even if someone would take me, it would be uncomfortable to marry so soon. But I must have a woman at once.

"I hitch my horse, put on new trousers, wash my feet and drive away. I arrive in Mestechko and call on friends. 'The season,' I say, 'is a busy one. No time for talking. Don't you know of some woman, even if a little blind? I am interested in matrimony.'

" 'There are women, of course,' they say, 'but the season is a busy one. Nobody is interested in matrimony just now. Go to Anissya, the soldier's widow. Maybe you'll persuade her.'

"So I went. I enter. I see a woman sitting on a chest, scratching her leg. 'Good day,' I say. 'Stop scratching your leg. I have business with you.'

" 'One thing,' she says, 'doesn't disturb the other.'

" 'The season,' I say, 'is a busy one. No time for long discussion. You and I are two. A third isn't needed. Let's get married and tomorrow go out into the fields to reap.'

" 'This is possible,' she says, 'if you are interested in me.'

"I look her over. She's a baba all right. Strong, healthy, can work.

" 'Of course I'm interested. But answer me as if you were at an inquest. How old are you?'

" 'There aren't as many years as it may seem. My years have not been counted. But the year of my birth, if you must know, was one thousand eight hundred and eighty-six.'

" 'The season,' I say, 'is a busy one. No time for long conferences. If you are not lying, that will do.'

" 'I don't lie. God punishes lies. Shall I get ready then?'

" 'Yes, get ready. Have you many belongings?'

" 'Not so many,' she says. 'A hole in my pocket, a louse in my undershirt, a chest and a feather bed.'

"So we loaded the chest and the feather bed on the cart. I threw in a tea kettle and two logs of wood, and off we drove.

"I drive the horse, and hurry, but my baba on the chest is trembling and making plans. Of how she will live and what she will cook and that it wouldn't hurt to go to [illegible]

" 'Get down,' I say.

"My baba gets down from the cart. Here I see she gets down in a sort of uninteresting way. Sidewise, sidewise, as if she were lame on both feet. Fie, I think, what stupidity!

" 'What, baba,' I say, 'you seem to be limping.'

" 'No,' she says, 'I'm just flirting a bit.'

" 'Excuse me,' I say, 'it's a serious affair if you're limping. In my household no limping is wanted.'

" 'No,' she says, 'it's only a little on my left foot. Half an inch only is missing.'

" 'Half an inch or an inch is no difference. The season is a busy one. No time for measuring. But this is impossible. You can't even carry water without splashing it. Excuse me, I've been mistaken.'

" 'No,' she protests, 'the affair is concluded.'

" 'No, this won't do. Everything else would suit me. The shape of your face and the years one thousand eight hundred and eighty-six, but I cannot. Excuse me, I am in error.'

"Here my baba began yelling and fighting. Couldn't help that, of course. But I, at this time, carried all her belongings back into the courtyard again.

"She hit me once or twice over the ears, and then said, 'Beat your luck that you noticed. Now take me back home.'

"We got into the cart and drove off. We were about seven versts from her home when a terrible anger came over me. The season, I think, is a busy one. No time for talking and here I have the goodness to return brides to their homes!

"I throw off her belongings from the cart and watch to see what she will do. The baba couldn't keep still but jumped off after her things. I turned the mare and drove to the forest. And that was the end of the affair. However she got home with her chest and her feather bed is unknown to me. But she did, and a year later she got married. And now she's on crutches."

MIKAIL ZOCHTCHENKO.

A COMMUNICATION

For a Japanese Boycott

SIR: As recent editorials in The New Republic indicate, the peace movement today is divided as much as ever upon the question of economic sanctions against an aggressor. One group, represented by various League of Nations societies, supports the application of sanctions, provided they are international in character and are taken only after Japan has been adjudged guilty of having illegally resorted to war. A second group, ably led by The New Republic, opposes sanctions on the ground "that the peace among nations cannot be kept by force or the fear of force." There is grave danger that, as a result of this division, the institution of war will emerge triumphant. In the following paragraphs I shall attempt to demonstrate that opposition to sanctions is unsound.

In arguing that an economic boycott would lead to

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this distinction is justified, however, is shown by the fact that Mahatma Gandhi, the world's leading pacifist, supports a boycott of British goods as a "non-violent" means of obtaining independence. Moreover, The New Republic which, I assume, is opposed to "violence," warmly supports the right of labor to strike despite the fact that a strike may injure many "innocent" people. There is no difference in principle between a labor strike and an international boycott. Both are economic measures of force directed toward a social purpose. Harmful as its ultimate effects may be, a boycott is less destructive and more humane than a bombardment. Economic pressure is an effective process of bringing a people to recognize their international obligations without necessarily resulting in the loss of life. Since Japan produces its food at home or obtains it from Manchuria, economic pressure would not starve the Japanese people; by terminating Japanese exports of silk, however, such pressure would starve the Japanese military machine. Moreover, the Japanese people could at any time escape the consequences of a boycott by obliging their government to alter its course.

The fear that a boycott will lead to "war" seems also to be based on the assumption that to make a boycott effective it would be necessary to establish a naval blockade of Japanese ports. Actually, however, all that is necessary is legislation by foreign governments prohibiting the entrance of Japanese goods into their territories and preventing the clearance of exports to Japan. Because of its vital dependence on foreign trade, such action would soon bring Japan to terms, no matter what resistance it should attempt to offer; instead of a world "war" resulting from such a boycott, peace would be quickly restored.

"Moral suasion" having failed in the present crisis, it is more clear than ever that if a genuine international community is to be established, some form of coercion against a state illegally embarking on war is as essential as a police force within a state. It is contended, however, that there is a fundamental difference between the arrest of an individual and the coercion of a nation; in the former case, it is said, the guilty person alone is penalized, while in the latter, suffering is inflicted upon "innocent" and "guilty" individuals alike. This contrast overlooks the fact that an offense committed by or punishment imposed upon a given individual inevitably affects "innocent" members of his family as well as himself. It is impossible, moreover, for anyone who believes in the principle of human solidarity to admit that a people can or should be immunized from the consequences of the acts of their government. Should such a principle be established, governments would become completely irresponsible. The desire to prevent the suffering of "innocent" people is thoroughly praiseworthy. Nevertheless, greater suffering to "innocent" Chinese (not to mention the Japanese soldiers whose lives are being lost and the Japanese civilians who will have to pay the bills), is being and will be caused by the uncontrolled progress of the Japanese military machine than would be caused to "innocent" Japanese by the imposition of an effectively applied international boycott. Today the Chinese people who are victims of Japanese aggression are more "inno-

argue against a boycott on humanitarian grounds thus show far more solicitude for the Japanese than for the Chinese.

To escape from this conclusion, one might argue that while the outside world is not responsible for the damage done by Japan to China, it would be responsible for injury done by an international boycott against "innocent" Japanese. This argument overlooks the fact that Japanese militarism could not exist except for the continuance of Japanese foreign trade upon its present basis. To insist, as The New Republic does, upon "business as usual" with Japan is indirectly to underwrite Japanese militarism. During the World War it was possible to make a case for "neutral" rights. Today, however, the status of war is radically different from that in 1914. At that time war was legal and there were no adequate means of determining whether or not states had violated their obligations. Today war has been "outlawed" and institutions have been established for the settlement of disputes by pacific means. If the only answer of the outside world to a power which deliberately defies these institutions is to insist on the right of belligerent trade, then all hope of doing away with war must disappear. Should the United States, despite the anti-war pact, now adopt a policy of trading with aggressor states, the result will be not only that we shall derive profits from a supposedly outlawed institution, but that sooner or later we shall be drawn into war, as in 1917, in order to defend economic "interests."

Some opponents of an economic boycott nevertheless favor an embargo on the export of arms and loans to Japan. In an age when the distinction between combatants and noncombatants has disappeared, the differentiation between goods in general and armaments is of little value. Neither is there much difference between an embargo upon the export of goods for cash and such export upon credit. The danger of adopting a halfway embargo is that it will create needless irritation without effectively stopping hostilities.

Others urge that despite the failure to check Japan by "moral suasion," matters should be allowed to take their course, since Japan will ultimately suffer from its present venture and China ultimately will triumph. Would that this romantic theory that Good always conquers Evil were sound! This theory, however, could be applied to any war in history, and if true, it would make all peace machinery unnecessary. What it overlooks is the tremendous amount of suffering caused by the process of war—suffering which cannot be obliterated by the ultimate triumph of Good. Japan may not be strong enough to conquer and successfully exploit China; but it will probably prove strong enough to throw China into complete anarchy and bring about the utter demoralization of the Orient. Such a result is bound to be harmful to the Japanese and all other peoples. For this very reason any process leading to such a result should be arrested as soon as possible. The weakness of Secretary Stimson's refusal to recognize the legal validity of any settlement made by Japan in violation of the anti-war pact is that it does nothing to prevent the suffering caused by war. Moreover, it is doubtful whether this "legal" sanction alone will be any more effective in

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ing Soviet Russia to pay its debts or the 1923 Central American treaty has been in preventing revolution.

Thus the "business as usual" policy strengthens Japanese militarism and does a grave injustice to China. It likewise deals a vital blow to the international peace institutions which have been built up so laboriously since the World War. The failure to stop Japan's aggression has already increased the sentiment that a nation's security must rest upon armaments; it has bolstered militarism and imperialism in every country. I am satisfied, therefore, that in opposing the principle of economic sanctions, The New Republic and its followers are unwittingly joining hands with the Tories of Great Britain, the Nationalists of France and the Hearst press in undermining the principle of international solidarity and in reviving a jungle world. Pascal was right when he said: "Justice without might is unavailing, for the wicked are ever with us. Might without justice stands condemned. We must therefore mate justice with might and to that end we must ensure that what is just is mighty and that what is mighty is just."

New York City. RAYMOND LESLIE BUELL.

CORRESPONDENCE

Winter Evening in Chicago

SIR: It is rather a coincidence that it was just at the time I was reading Ernest Jerome Hopkins' account of police brutality, entitled "Our Lawless Police," that I had an opportunity to observe an example of it at first hand.

On the evening of December 28 my wife and myself were bound for Chicago's West Side, where a memorial to my brother affords pleasure and education to boys. Passing 1420 Roosevelt Road, we saw a patrol wagon, crowds of people, policemen. Curious, we stopped our car. Of a sudden the policeman holding the crowd back decided he wanted to have a look at the body lying on the sidewalk. As is wont to happen, the crowd followed behind him. The sergeant on duty took one look at the surging group and yelled, "Oh, so we can't hold 'em back! Well, we'll see!" And he swaggered forward, swinging his night club right and left. The curious scattered like chickens.

I, holding my wife's arm, started to walk around to our car. I refused to run. The sergeant therewith decided I was a molesting force and tightened a broad hand over my shoulder, shoving me along. I attempted to wrench myself free. Here the sergeant sensed danger, and gave a signal. Next thing, four huskies grabbed hold of me, while I, of course without reason, was still trying to wrench myself loose. Seeing the sergeant menacingly raising his night club, I instinctively grabbed hold of its end and clutched it for dear life. With that, the sergeant lunged into a volley of punches to my jaw and face.

They hurried me off to the patrol wagon. I was trying frantically to distinguish the sergeant's number. . . . All the while, and now more desperately, my wife was crying. The sergeant yelled to drive me to the station and lock me up. But then he hesitated. "Still want my number?" he asked. I answered that I did. The sergeant yelled his counter threat, "Okay, Bud. I'll lock ya up for two days before ya can even see a soul." Just then I heard my wife's plaintive appeal, and relented. I told the policeman beside me that I didn't want the sergeant's number, and at his suggestion agreed to apologize.

A last word: I was a well dressed citizen, I spoke good English and I had my wife with me who saw the entire incident. It is possible that her cries might have somewhat penetrated beneath the coats of the Lawless Police. Consider the fate of a foreigner, who couldn't understand or wouldn't know what to say, who was shabbily dressed—and alone.

Chicago, Ill. [illegible]

To Replace Judge Cardozo

SIR: I am informed that Governor Roosevelt is considering Mr. Walter Pollak to fill the vacancy left by the promotion of Judge Cardozo to the Supreme Court of the United States. The news is most encouraging, and those who have greeted the latter appointment with such hearty approval will realize the peculiar appropriateness of the appointment of Mr. Pollak to serve in the New York court. The following proportion comes naturally and inevitably to mind: As Judge Cardozo is to Justice Holmes in the Supreme Court, so is Mr. Pollak to Judge Cardozo on the New York bench. Mr. Pollak was long the personal assistant of Judge Cardozo when the latter was engaged in private practice; his clear penetrating mind is like Cardozo's, and he is recognized as one of the ablest men in the legal profession. Moreover, he is a true liberal in the same sense in which the term is applied to Justice Holmes and Judge Cardozo. The popular applause which followed President Hoover's appointment will greet Governor Roosevelt's action if he maintains the high traditions of New York's high court through the appointment of Walter Pollak.

New York City. JOHN DEWEY.

For a Film Society

SIR: A small group is interested in forming a permanent society in New York City to show, once a month, the best American and foreign films. The aims of the society would be the revival of important films of the past, the presentation of new films which cannot be seen elsewhere and the formation of a permanent film library. Will all persons interested communicate with the undersigned at 102 East Twenty-second Street, New York City?

New York City. KENNETH WHITE.

Bloody Harlan

SIR: Thirteen writers and professional people went into Kentucky two weeks ago to distribute food to starving miners, and to reëstablish their elementary human and constitutional rights of free speech and free assembly. We failed in the second mission; we were kidnaped and forcibly ejected from the state. Our chairman, Waldo Frank, and Allan Taub, attorney for the strikers, were severely beaten. Some of the food we had taken in was confiscated. The local authorities ridiculed our request for protection and denied us permission to hold meetings and give food to destitute miners' families. They informed us grimly that they had decided to "run the Reds out of Kentucky." They define as "Reds" all who sympathize with the miners' struggle against starvation wages; impartial investigators, newspaper reporters and physicians have been accorded the same treatment that we received.

After the mob had kidnaped us and threatened that "if you ever come back we'll fill you full of buckshot," we came to Washington to appeal to Congress for a federal investigation into the terror and starvation in Kentucky. Federal laws have been broken, the Constitutions of Kentucky and the United States torn up. The plea of the miners and of our committee for food and justice is sneered at by the local authorities. We charge that democratic and constitutional government has been abolished in the strike area, where the coal operators have imported gangsters to break the strike, to terrorize and starve the miners back into peonage. The cry of "Bolshevism" is a smokescreen for this attack upon the strikers.

We have had a hearing before Senators Costigan, Cutting, Norris, La Follette, Borah, Brookhart, Logan and Frazier. We hope for a federal investigation before a massacre takes place—the situation is so tense that such an eventuality is not improbable.

We appeal to you for a substantial contribution to our work. Funds sent to us will be used for three purposes: to get a federal investigation as speedily as possible; to provide further food for thousands of miners living on the bare subsistence level; and to pay for competent legal defense for the miners arrested while on their way to our meeting and now faced with framed-up charges of criminal syndicalism.

LISTON M. OAK.

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What Do Liberals Hope For?

SIR: *After the opening moves have been made in a game of* chess, and the strategy of the opposing players is becoming apparent, one or the other is said to have the "better game." That is the expression which comes to mind after observing the keen thrusts of Mr. Edmund Wilson at the liberals in The New Republic of February 10, and then noting the adroit parries of Mr. Chase. Careful study of the two positions at this stage of the engagement leads this observer to believe that Mr. Wilson has the better game, but will be unable to penetrate the logic of Mr. Chase's defense.

The statement of Mr. Chase that his social views are molded by changing circumstances and the possibilities of a newly discovered "billion horsepower," is creditable in that it reveals a supple and adaptable mind; but it is no answer to Mr. Wilson's charge that, whatever the change imposed by invention or economic evolution, the gulf of class, with all its inequalities, yawns as widely as before.

It seems to me that Mr. Wilson's quarrel with the liberals is one of position rather than belief. Mr. Chase, Mr. Beard and Mr. Lippmann are diagnosticians, not surgeons. They isolate the suffered, subject him to skillful tests, locate the trouble, then leave the actual operation to someone more accustomed to wielding the knife.

In this particular case the malady has been diagnosed with remarkable precision and certainty, as Mr. Wilson himself admits, and the remedy, if not written in plain terms, at least has been hinted at too often and too strongly to permit of any misunderstanding.

Mr. Wilson should not demand unreasonably that liberal leaders lend further assistance The logic of their position makes additional aid, however much they might desire to give it, unethical and indefensible. He will not find his surgeon in the liberal clinic.

Kansas City, Mo. JOHN H. FREEMAN.

SIR: May I ask what is the qualitative difference between a "synthesis" to be created at some distant date by Mr. Stuart Chase and the "standard analysis" presented by Karl Marx seventy years ago?

Isn't it exactly the "traditional" manner in which our 1932 American-model billion-horsepower capitalism is functioning, which produces "orthodox communists" today? As Mr. Chase grudgingly admits, Marx has proved himself "a good guesser."

What are the stubborn elements whose synthesis Mr. Chase is determined to effect, with but scant hope of success, until death overtakes him? It must be a pretty tough job, and a reference to some seventy-year-old Marxian "dogmas" might explain why.

In common with others of his class, Mr. Chase abhors the poverty, unemployment, waste and commercialization which capitalism produces. On the other hand, as a successful accountant and writer, he derives substantial comforts and satisfactions from the economic system whose evils repel him. In the last analysis, the comforts and satisfactions which Mr. Chase, or any of us, obtains in a profit economy, flow directly or indirectly from the exploitation of others on a lower economic plane. We are getting more because others are getting less. No moral judgment is intended. I do not for a moment accuse Mr. Chase of insincerity or selfishness. Most of us are in varying degrees both exploiters and exploited, without being conscious of either role. The fact remains that he is trying to synthesize or reconcile two irreconcilable desires, i. e., to abolish the widespread evils stemming from our economic system, the while preserving the benefits and satisfactions which flow to him personally by virtue of his position on the economic scale. . . .

Hollywood, Calif. L. H. SACKIN.

SIR: Mr. Stuart Chase, in reply to Mr. Edmund Wilson in The New Republic of February 10, writes about himself, "He [Mr. Chase] is obviously not an orthodox liberal, for he supports the Russian dictatorship, and repeatedly hints at the benefits of an economic dictatorship in this country."

It is precisely here that the bone of contention lies. The Bolsheviks think of the dictatorship as a means to an end. Mr. Chase thinks of the dictatorship as an end in itself. Hence Mr. Chase's lack of confidence in the masses; and the Bolsheviks' complete faith.

Should Mr. Chase insist that he, too, like the Bolsheviks, looks upon dictatorship as a means to an end, then let him either accept Bolshevik Marxism or offer an original "way out."

STUART REDMOND.

Brooklyn, N. Y.

SIR: Mr. Edmund Wilson seems to have been carried away by his sentimental enthusiasm to the point of falsifying his philosophy in The New Republic of February 10. He objects to Mr. Charles A. Beard's objection to Russia that "it rules by tyranny and terror, with secret police, espionage and arbitrary executions" on the ground that the capitalist government of the United States rules by the same means. Mr. Edmund Wilson believes that his personal liberty "is not today worth a cent as soon as you step out of your owning-class orbit, and that you are lucky if you do not land in jail or get run out of town or shot, like the reporters, Brookwood organizers and American Civil Liberties representatives who tried to lend a hand at Harlan or Lawrence." Aside from the obvious fact that fifty million American capitalist wrongs do not make a Russian communist right, I should like to point out that Mr. Wilson has been able in capitalist America to step out of his orbit, or into his new orbit, if he prefers, and to report in the pages of The New Republic, sometimes with admirable achievement, what he has found. It is true that since he wrote his article, Mr. Wilson has been run out of capitalist Kentucky, but had Mr Wilson changed his name to Steel and attempted to report some of the miserable facts of Russian existence for a pamphlet—there are no New Republics in Russia—he would today find himself confined to communist jails, if he did not have the horrible misfortune to be shot by some of his comrades, who loosely considered that act a necessity for the good of his soul.

M. R. WERNER.

New York City.

SIR: A worker's response to Edmund Wilson's article on liberals, and your editorial reply, and Stuart Chase's defense of his attitude, is that while some of you claim suddenly to see the light and others of you announce glorious plans for the salvation of this society, the condition of workers grows worse, unemployment increases, wages are slashed, families are evicted—for us this depression is a reality, not the inspiration for mental exercises.

As I see it, all your plans are merely utopian, for you have no power to put them into effect. But in the hands of workers lies a power that can sweep all else before it—only we must learn to make use of it for our own advantage.

JO VOGEL.

Brooklyn, N. Y.

SIR: The critical article in the issue of February 10 by Mr. Edmund Wilson is, in my estimation, exceedingly apropos and well timed. I heartily agree with Mr. Wilson in his complaint that our intellectuals and writers are so vague regarding definite steps to be taken here and now to remedy the evils of the system whose shortcomings they so clearly and astutely perceive. . . .

I would suggest that a manifesto be drawn up and submitted, calling upon all interested followers to meet in specified places for a given period for the purpose of studying the Russian language, after which we could all be shipped to Russia in contingents as fast as they could make place for us to help in the upbuilding of an ideal society, if such a thing is attainable at all. When we have succeeded in giving every Russian an automobile, a radio, a bathtub, a house and a shave, and all the other things we consider necessary to the well being of mankind in this day and age, we should then be in a position to make short work of the situation back home. This suggestion should also give aid and comfort to those people who tell you "if you must agitate, for heaven's sake get out of my country and talk where they'll listen to you!"

H. C. B.

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The Decline of Spengler

Man and Technics: A Contribution to a Philosophy of Life, by Oswald Spengler. Translated by Charles Francis Atkinson. New York: Alfred A. Knopf. 104 pages. $2.

THE INTELLIGENT reader of "The Decline of the West" saw beneath that elaborate historical survey the taint of apologetics: the book was essentially in the same strain as H. S. Chamberlain's "The Foundations of the Nineteenth Century"; and its godlike sweep could not altogether remove the flavor of the penny missionary tract, calling the Germans back to their ancient gods in the very breath in which it bade them steel themselves to the hard brilliance appropriate to the "winter" of a civilization.

Spengler openly labels his new book "A Contribution to a Philosophy of Life." The little treatise has all the defects and virtues of "The Decline of the West" in miniature; but it presents Spengler's thought in its pure form, without the erudite citations which commanded respect and stimulated fresh responses and inquiries in the masterpiece itself. In short, this is the oyster without his shell of scholarship: a sad spectacle, weaker and more defenseless than the most timid of vertebrates. For what does one discover? This prodigious and original man combines the learning of Aristotle with the yearning of Adolf Hitler. So far from being a great scholar and historian he is really the last of the German romantic poets.

"World history," says Spengler, "strides on from catastrophe to catastrophe, whether we can comprehend and prove the fact or not." This sentence is the key to "Man and Technics": by exegesis one can discover in it all the important elements in his philosophy.

First Spengler's real virtue: he deals in world history and thinks poetically within the large framework formed by planetary events: with respect to his *system* of thought he is the least parochial of historians. Second: his sense of catastrophe. A crumbling social order, a faltering political power, the last gasp of Junkerdom, frustrated and furious in a world that for fifty years, by virtue of its high dynastic discipline, it had almost dominated: the death of that mythical *Urdeutschland* whose foundations Veblen analyzed in "Imperial Germany." This is the *leitmotiv* of Spengler's thought. Spengler's spirit is in that lost world. His hopes are buried there, and all that departs from it represents either the frigidity of mechanical civilization, the "cowardice" of pacifism and Marxism, or the anti-vital plans of the intellectuals who would hold the activity of the "blood-men" within the boundaries of reason and order.

Finally: there is Spengler's open contempt for objective proof. He makes up history and science as he goes along, and when it suits his convenience he is ready to throw a whole century of close factual investigation into the scrap heap. The theory of language he puts forth in "Man and Technics," for example, happens to be in conflict not merely with that of the "romantic" philologists he despises, but with that of Otto Jespersen, the foremost modern scholar. He is no more concerned with this fact than a theosophist is concerned with the absence of positive proof for the existence of Atlantis. The old international joke about the way that the Englishman, the Frenchman, the German and the Pole wrote a treatise on the elephant veritably applies to Spengler: he sits in his study and writes a book about the metaphysical idea of an elephant.

Do I seem to be unjust to this great man? On the contrary, I merely wish to guard against his being dismissed as a poet, as a man of deep intuition and brilliant insight, whose class prejudices and furies do not altogether undermine his value for an intelligent reader. Let me summarize his thesis.

Spengler defines technics as the tactics of living: it is not to be understood in terms of the implement but in terms of what is done with it: technics is purposive activity. Man is for Spengler a beast of prey. In order to establish this fact, Spengler converts man from an omnivorous animal, who is always found in groups, into a solitary carnivorous beast, "brave, crafty and cruel." This inventive carnivore came suddenly into existence through the genesis of the human hand: with the hand developed the tool. Now arises for Spengler the genuine human soul, a very solitary soul, "a foe to everyone, killing, hating, resolute to conquer or die."

In the second stage of man's development, speech and collective enterprise appear together, and with this, a differentiation between the leaders and the led. We now approach the final stage in man's drama: technical thought, far advanced beyond its primitive basis, confronts "big problems": in the new world of the Machine the booty ideal of the beast of prey is thought out to its logical end: Nature is pillaged. But the instrument of this conquest, the Machine, is now rising up against its creator, Nordic Man. In a fatal moment of blindness, he gave the lesser breeds without the law the secrets of his power: meanwhile, the envy of the mass of "hands" threatens the (Nordic) Faustian leaders, and the born leader himself is beginning his flight from the Machine. Our supreme machine technic will come to an end with Faustian civilization itself, and one day will lie in ruins, forgotten. Faced with this destiny, there is only one world-outlook that is worthy of us: "better a short life, full of deeds and glory, than a long life without content."

As thought, this thesis is, to say the least, a little one-sided. Spengler's solitary beast is a mythical creature, taken over whole from Nietzsche: if anything is obvious about the organization and development of man and his arts, it is the fact of domestication: stock-breeding and plant-nurture were the arts by means of which man subdued the world around him and gained the extra energy needed for free activity, and his own domestication, including the increased care of children and the establishment of a stable domicile, went hand in hand with these advances. The germs of this domestication were already present in the close relation of mother and child, enforced by man's unusually long infancy: power has been derived, then, not from solitary beasts, killing and hating, but from the sentimental and coöperative and specifically human impulses which are the basis of every form of domesticity. But it is cruel to examine Spengler's thought critically and realistically: it is all of the same texture. The animus of the book is profoundly one with that maudlin romanticism, that sentimental apotheosis of brutality and the quite understandable mood of desperation which characterize the Nazis today. Spengler and Hitler, living in Munich, have more in common than their place of residence.

For those of us who had looked forward to "Man and Technics," in the hope that Spengler would bring to our difficult contemporary problems—which may well end in the ruin of our civilization—his wide comparative knowledge of parallel states in other civilizations, this book is a disappointment. Even the poetry is a little feeble. One trusts that the larger work, of which this is only a fragment, will find Spengler in a post-romantic mood

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The Climate for Planning

America Faces the Future, edited by Charles A. Beard. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company. 416 pages. $3.

THIS IS a source book, almost a scrapbook, devoted to the idea of social planning. It consists of eight articles from The Forum, a number of speeches by men of affairs, including two by President Butler, and a collection of such "state papers" as "The Swope Plan" and the proposals of the Committee on Continuity of Business and Employment of the United States Chamber of Commerce. There is little new material with the exception of brief opening and closing chapters by the distinguished editor.

The two purposes of the book are expressed in the titles given to its parts—"The New Intellectual and Moral Climate" and "Blue Prints for a Planned Economy." The first of these is admirably carried out. It *is* "something new under the sun" that chambers of commerce and colleges of bishops and the presidents of universities and railroads should be criticizing the capitalistic system in terms once confined to "long-haired agitators," and it is useful to have a volume which records the rapid spread of the cult of planning. A cynic might suggest that it is likely to serve as a sort of reverse "Oh, Yeah?" when some of the critics turn back to competitive ideals during the next boom; but "it may very well be," as the editor claims, that "in the faded papers recording the proposals advanced in 1931 by our directors of opinion," the historian of the future "will discover . . . the beginnings of drastic changes."

The second claim, however, is more dubious. "Blue Prints for a Planned Economy" are probably too much to ask of anyone in 1931-32, and Part II hardly merits the description. It may be intentional irony that includes within it "President Hoover's Plan" and a pronouncement of the A. F. of L.; but it is not easy to see—even in the best contributions—that "the concreteness of their proposals" and "the realistic character of their reasoning" in fact provide "a program for national procedure in economy." Where they are most concrete and realistic, as in the detail of Mr. Swope's scheme for private unemployment insurance, they are neither national nor all-inclusive; and where their scope is wider, as in Mr. Beard's own "Forum Plan," it is hard to be sure of their concreteness. Large-scale industry, in his proposals, is to be run by syndicated holding companies guided by a National Economic Council and regulated on public-utility principles of prudent investment and fair return. But what is to be done if a firm does not wish to join the syndicate, or if a syndicate refuses to follow the Council's advice, is nowhere indicated. Indeed, the avoidance of questions of conflict is the most puzzling feature of Mr. Beard's analysis. Perhaps it is for tactical reasons that he so strongly emphasizes the points of agreement between his plan and those of the business leaders (though his references to "doles" and Russia and the Sherman Act do show unexpected kinship) and that he so largely disregards the disagreements implicit in his own. "If the American economic system could be run full blast on the principles of efficiency for five years," very likely the surplus *would* be enough to buy out a large part of the capitalists' present claims. But to think that on that account business men could be easily persuaded to accept the limitation of profits in the very fields in which the biggest fortunes have been made, is to assume a mutation that does not describe in

class struggles cannot believe that such a change could be achieved without bitter conflict. Yet of this there is scarcely a hint in his chapters, unless indeed students of his earlier work are expected to find one when he compares the present situation with that "faced by the Fathers who framed the Constitution of the United States."

CARTER GOODRICH.

Life Mask

The Letters of Robert Burns: 1780-1796, edited by De Lancey Ferguson. Two vols. New York: Oxford University Press. 795 pages. $10.

WITH THIS publication of Burns's letters, his popular reputation loses three-quarters of its glamor. Where is the noble savage of eighteenth-century Edinburgh, ruined by drink and women? He is gone. Where is the poet who was his own worst enemy, his own God and Devil in one breath, the peasant Don Juan? He is very dim indeed, a patriotic Scotch legend, living quite apart from Burns' own writing, to be found only in the shabby school-text essays of Thomas Carlyle, W. E. Henley and Robert Louis Stevenson.

The personality that emerges from these letters bears little resemblance to the legend. Even the handsome, flashing, familiar portrait by Alexander Nasmyth seems unreal. There is too much of the ideal poetic healthy Scotch animal in it. The miniature by Reid, as Burns himself confessed, is far better. It shows a dark, sober face—the face of a physically tired man. The eyes are large, alive, intelligent (by no means dreamy), the mouth sensitive; the lips have a tendency to curve abruptly, but are compressed into a straight line. Below the face there is a respectable white neckcloth, the ends knotted into a tight, neat bow. The shoulders are broad, but stooped; whatever is indicated of the torso is that of a large structure, wasted, as we learn from the letters, by ill health.

Burns' fatal weakness, about which we have heard so often and for which so many eloquent apologies have been made, was a common Scotch disease—poverty. In 1780 at the age of twenty-one, the poet was already an old man. The best years of his bodily strength were buried in the barren acres surrounding his father's cottage. Whatever else remained was to be consumed in the devilishly poor farm at Ellisland and in trips about the country on horseback, through Scotch mist and rain (excellent for rheumatism) as exciseman. He had inherited a strong body and it had grown weak, even frail; it was something to write about, to exaggerate the sickness of, to lose sight of momentarily in love and drink, to burden with fear of debts and the responsibilities of a man who had a large family at his heels: a mother, two brothers, a wife, legitimate and illegitimate children.

The letters cannot be read for entertainment. With a very few exceptions they paint a dark picture. There is, of course, the complete letter which was quoted in Mrs. Carswell's recent life of Burns and which caused a mild storm when the book was published in England: Burns had used language no less frank than that of D. H. Lawrence in "Lady Chatterley's Lover." There is a roaring letter written in broad Scots to William Nicol; another that serves as a background for Burns' masterpiece, "The Jolly Beggars," and still another announcing the birth of twins to Jean Armour—but these are rare and not at all

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gained from the letters, however, is a conviction of Burns' essential manliness, his literary intelligence (heretofore much underrated) and his integrity as a poet.

Burns was not a great letter writer, in the sense, let us say, of Madame de Sévigné. The best of what he had to say was written into his poetry, but he was always a competent artist. If anything, he was a bit too cautious, too conscious of the person to whom the letter was directed. This restraint, however, is balanced by the fact that each letter was written for a definite purpose, in which the self-portraiture appears indirectly. These purposes are often clarified by a number of letters to different people written within a single week's time. His motives for maintaining a large correspondence may be classified under several headings: economic, for his letters were a means of obtaining patronage and money for his poems; critical, for he taught himself to criticize his own work and that of others by letters to his editors, Johnson and Thompson, and to his friends, Mrs. Dunlop and Mrs. Riddell; finally, to relieve himself of boredom and loneliness—and here we find the reason for the wide variety of his letter-writing acquaintance and the curiously stilted paper love affair with Mrs. Agnes M'Lehose.

Since the M'Lehose (Clarinda-Sylvander) correspondence has done much to discredit Burns as a letter writer, it might be well to make a brief summary of the context in which the letters are found in Mr. Ferguson's two volumes. The M'Lehose affair belongs to the Edinburgh period. To Edinburgh literary patrons, Burns was notorious rather than socially acceptable. His relationships at home, notably his status with Jean Armour and her family, hung fire and were, for the moment, far behind him. His loneliness, a sickness from which he never quite recovered, first came to light in Edinburgh. He was ripe for a bluestocking love affair. Jean could never supply whatever intellectual demands Burns might make upon her. He broke his leg and was confined to his lodgings. Clarinda would serve, badly enough, as a substitute for the bluestocking mistress. The affair, begun in boredom, was to end in boredom; Burns never solved the riddle of making love to a "lady." The unfortunate quarrel with Mrs. Riddell was an episode of the same order, but this was some time later, and Burns' defiant loneliness had acquired an edge of bitterness.

The later years of his life were black indeed. "Tam O'Shanter," his last flash of poetic genius, was written in 1791. He was a sharp enough critic to realize that his best work was done, but he could relieve his boredom by editing a bawdy song. He refused to allow Thompson the pleasure of marring his stanzas to "Bonnie Lesley"; and as a warning against further mutilations and in protest against Thompson's squeamish behavior, he enclosed a flagrantly obscene poem on Spring for the editor's grave consideration. The failure of his farm, his ill health, the shadow of future debts, were closing round him. Panic never reaches the surface of his well rounded prose, but it is indicated in his desire to retain his position as exciseman. His Jacobin sympathies are denied. Disaster is on its way. One of the last letters, reproduced in facsimile, is literally scrawled and blotted.

Although Mr. Ferguson has discovered little in the way of new material, his painstaking correction of the blunders made by earlier editors of Burns' letters has thrown the full-length portrait of the poet's personality into a fresh perspective. It is unlikely that many more letters of importance will be found, and even if they should be ex- humed from some forgotte- [illegible] work would still remain as one of the few valid interpretations of a poet who has been idolized and neglected, and in either case misunderstood.

HORACE GREGORY.

The Eternal Feminist

The End of Desire, by Robert Herrick. New York: Farrar and Rinehart. $2.50.

MR. HERRICK gives us his theme with reservations: "The ironic transposition of the ancient sexual values, at least of those parts conventionally attributed to either sex for untold generations. Serena Massey . . . assumes the traditional male role in her relations with the opposite sex, while her lover for the moment . . . exemplifies the romantic and idealistic aspirations commonly attributed to the domestic woman."

Mr. Herrick knows that these "conventional" and "common" attributions are largely wrong, and that women are not in essence romantic or idealistic. Also he knows that the ground of that phase of the sex conflict which he depicts is not exactly new; that women like Serena Massey, relieved of the material and spiritual dominance of the male, have "for untold generations" acted as Serena acts. Serena is a very ancient type in modern trappings. She wears a Panama hat instead of the crown of Egypt; she deals with aspects of science instead of Russian imperial affairs; but in matters of love, or as she prefers to put it, of sex life, she behaves like Catherine and Cleopatra, and like Delilah, shearing of his glory her lover—in fact, like any masterful and resourceful woman of any age, who has thrown over the spiritual values of man and "emancipated" herself from that control.

We have a finely built, vivid portrait of this woman as seen by her lover Redfield: her vital energy, intelligence, cleverness, honesty and slyness, physical charm. She is good material, and Redfield dreams of molding her to his imaginative vision of complete union, of a permanent living relation. His love for her is in a way tentative, it has not the *fougue* of a deep physical passion; he loves her as the possible embodiment of his dream image. And his dream of course is romantic in the sense that it is remote from experience. Perhaps Redfield should have known that the only way to build a life relation with a woman like Serena is on a deep practical foundation of common interests—not intellectual interests, but children, money, life and death matters.

But Serena already has her children, grown ones, and even a grandchild, and plenty of money; her husband dying, she has no idea whatever of replacing him. She keeps Redfield circling about her like an inferior planet. She "combines" her sex life with a multitude of other interests, keeps it strictly in its place, and guards with pedantic jealousy her independence. Redfield is interested in her children, wise and useful to them; he hopes to be nearer to Serena, too, through his usefulness. But his station as a minor satellite is fixed; he reminds one of the pathetic lover on the back seat of the carriage, in Turgenev's "Torrents of Spring."

The end of his dream and his desire comes dramatically, in that finely narrated voyage in the Caribbean. Serena is tiring of their "combination" and she acts, true to type, with ruthless brutality, nearly costing Redfield his life. His successor is at hand. And Redfield, his dream broken, will not miss his mistress. He is no Chevalier des Grieux.

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place, the dog Mike, the capable Mrs. Klotz and his work—probably he will not dream again.

Mr. Herrick is savagely caustic about the new completer freedoms demanded for and by women—at the "radical dinner," for example. But these are not matters of taste but of expediency. Women have a huge fund of energy, pent up during generations when they were taken care of, and if they now want to put both shoulders to the wheel and demand loose working clothes, who is to stop them? The pendulum will swing back. And now, as in the sixteenth century, certain words written by Paracelsus are valid:

> Woman, as such, represents the will (love and desire), and man, as such, represents reason (the imagination, logic and speculation). Woman represents the body, man the spirit. Man imagines, woman executes—man creates images, woman makes these images substantial. Man without woman is like a wandering spirit, a shadow without substance, seeking to embody itself in a corporeal form; woman is like a flower, a bud opening in the light of the sun; but sinking into darkness when man, her light, departs.

NEITH BOYCE.

Book Notes

History

THE BLACK DEATH AND MEN OF LEARNING, by Anna Montgomery Campbell. *New York: Columbia University Press. 210 pages. $3.*

A catastrophe which, in the space of five years, eliminated—according to various estimates—one to three-fourths of the population of Europe, may well engage the respectful if not admiring attention of what is left of civilization after the late War. Miss Campbell also reminds us that the Black Death of the years 1347-1352 marks the birth of "modern man." The present monograph is chiefly a study at first hand of a selected group of the "Plague Tractates" which were written during those evil years by physicians, scholars and men of learning: with a scholarly, if uninspired, thoroughness Miss Campbell arranges this dismal literature, examines it and analyzes the curious blend of science and superstition (shrewd hygienic ideas cheek by jowl with astrological fantasies) with which men sought to attack and overcome the curse of "buboes." Mortality statistics are given, as well as valuable information showing the effects of the pestilence upon the intellectual life of the time.

THE POPULIST REVOLT: A History of the Farmers' Alliance and the People's Party, by John D. Hicks. *Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press. 487 pages. $4.*

The last effort of the farmers to capture the government, state and national, was made in the 1880's and 1890's. In the newly settled Middle Border, they had many grievances: crop failures, low prices, grinding debts and high interest, an avalanche of foreclosures, high freight rates, unfair elevator practices. In the South the poor share-croppers suffered, as they still do, from the crop-lien system, which practically enslaved them to their creditors, the planters and country merchants. Professor Hicks's book gives a full and excellent account of the economic conditions there as well as in the West, of the grievances and remedies proposed, of the political movements and the leading personalities, of the final concentration upon the demand for "free silver," and the consequent absorption of the Populists by the Democratic party. The latter, like Pharaoh's kine, remained as lean as it was before, but the Populist party was dead, stone dead. Professor Hicks shows that many of the Populist proposals have been enacted into law, yet the farmer's ills persist. The book closes neatly with a parable. Alice learns that in Wonderland "it takes all the running you can do to

Biography

DEAR ROBERT EMMET, by R. W. Postgate. *New York: The Vanguard Press. 280 pages. $3.50.*

The history of Robert Emmet involves to such a degree the history of treacheries to the Irish republican cause that any life of the man must devote a large space to the continuous, almost hierarchical, line of traitors and spies. In this admirable biography, Robert Emmet appears a lesser figure of Irish revolutionary history than, say, Lawyer McNally, who on his deathbed gained absolution for his sins and satisfactory secrecy by confessing to a deaf, eccentric priest, or than the stage Irishman Bernard Duggan; for Emmet, as his biographer says, is like "a piece of very clear white glass. There is no distortion" in him, and he was attempting to free a people whose motives and history are a composite of distortion. Thus, the reasons for Emmet's failure are more important historically than the attempt itself, which was doomed from the start. His biographer, incidentally, should have devoted much more attention to the peculiar working-class nature of Emmet's rebellion, and have supplemented his excellent study of the personalities surrounding Emmet with a suggestion of the relationship between Irish labor and revolution.

FRANKLIN PIERCE: Fourteenth President of the United States, by Roy Franklin Nichols. *Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press. 615 pages. $5.*

This is the first complete biography of the fourteenth President, the only one who had New Hampshire for his birthplace. Franklin Pierce was not, as this painstaking biography demonstrates, a very fine man, Senator, soldier or lawyer; like Warren Gamaliel Harding, he was a compromise candidate for the presidency; yet he retains a certain importance in the history of American orthodoxy, as in that of American mediocrity. The gravest fault of his biographer is his great attention to minor details, when his energy might better have been directed to setting forth the real content of the issues involved in the political life of Franklin Pierce; but his scholarship is admirable, and the "Balance Sheet" he strikes at the end of the biography is a very fair estimate of his subject.

Science

HAS SCIENCE DISCOVERED GOD? A Symposium of Modern Scientific Opinion, edited by Edward H. Cotton. *New York: Thomas Y. Crowell Company. 308 pages. $3.50.*

Fifteen more or less eminent scientists and one psychic researcher have been voluntarily conscripted by the editor of this calamitous volume to testify *ad majorem gloriam Dei*. Nine of the authors submitted original briefs; the remaining seven (among whom are Eddington, Huxley, Jeans, Millikan and—most oddly—Albert Einstein) permitted reprinting from earlier writings. The result is a singular compound of weak science and worse theology which suggests that the book would be more correctly titled, "God Has Discovered Science." We learn, for instance, that "the geologist can tell approximately when mother love was born upon the earth"; that "all the greatest leaders of men were once babies and germ cells"; that "the virtues of a Stradivarius are among the glories of human ingenuity"; that "consciousness is an expression of cosmic energy"—and much more to the same purpose, whatever that is. There are nice photographs of the contributors.

THE NEW CONCEPTIONS OF MATTER, by C. G. Darwin. *New York: The Macmillan Company. 224 pages. $3.*

Those whose interest in modern physics is scientific rather than theological will welcome this book by Professor Darwin as one of the most straightforward and able contributions to a subject already overcrowded with "popular" accounts. The author—who, besides being a grandson of Charles Darwin, is Tait Professor of Natural Philosophy at the University of Aberdeen—presents the evidence of physical science in relation to the fundamental problems of matter and energy. Clearly, and without spurious rhetorical devices, he summarizes the foundations of atomic theory; he deals with mechanics, electron diffraction, the perplexing conflict between wave and particle theories of matter, and discusses such phenomena as

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Uncertainty Principle of Heisenberg, the author touches upon some of the philosophic problems involved, particularly those of free will and the theory of knowledge. Like Max Planck, Dr. Darwin refuses to admit that the evidence of recent physics justifies a belief in free will. Of the ambiguous situation brought about by the new conceptions of Probability, he very sensibly remarks, "We used to be faintly ashamed of the fact that we were not omniscient, but now ignorance has become respectable."

Fiction

THIS MAN IS MY BROTHER, by Myron Brinig. *New York: Farrar and Rinehart. $2.50.*

Myron Brinig has shifted his emphasis since he wrote "Singermann," to which this book is a sequel. His earlier novel was a straightforward, richly emotional chronicle of a family of Rumanian Jews, emigrants to the crude mining town of Silver Bow, Montana. Character was his primary interest. Now, however, he has come to see his Singermanns in symbolic terms. In the twenty years that have elapsed, the children and grandchildren of old Moses Singermann have achieved wealth, sophistication and a solid position in the community, but the loss of their religion and of their intense racial consciousness has made them psychologically insecure. The more articulate members of the tribe discuss the plight of the modern Jews as volubly as if they were figures in a Ludwig Lewisohn novel. Mr. Brinig, however, rejects—and with considerable satiric bitterness—Lewisohn's solution. He believes that the Jew should reconcile himself to complete absorption through intermarriage and should not cling stubbornly to an anachronistic clannishness. His novel is weighted down by indigestible chunks of argument; it is marred by the necessity which he has felt of making each Singermann typify a certain phase of the problem; it suffers from the fact that too many individual stories are woven too loosely into the main pattern. Until now a purely emotional novelist—sometimes to the point of lushness—with warmth and vitality as his chief assets, Brinig has had difficulty in coördinating intellect and feeling. "This Man Is My Brother" is not so good a book as "Singermann," but it seems to indicate that Brinig is broadening his range, and that henceforth he will be less content to deal with colorful surfaces.

Contributors

C. Hartley Grattan, who lives in New York, is a frequent contributor to literary and popular magazines. He is the author, among other volumes, of "Bitter Bierce" and "Why We Fought."

Ridgely Torrence is the author of several volumes of verse and of a number of plays for the Negro theatre, the best known being "The Rider of Dreams."

Mikäil Zochtchenko is a young Russian writer whose short stories, satirical sketches and essays have won him a considerable popularity in the U.S.S.R. The sketch published in the present issue of The New Republic was translated by Helena Clayton, who does publicity work for the Chicago Civic Opera Company.

Raymond Leslie Buell, research director of the Foreign Policy Association and author of several volumes on international affairs, contributes frequent articles to newspapers and magazines on international relations.

Lewis Mumford, whose work in the field of criticism and biography is well known to readers of The New Republic, is the author, among other volumes, of "The Golden Day," "Herman Melville" and, most recently, "The Brown Decades."

Carter Goodrich teaches American economic history at Columbia University.

Horace Gregory, lecturer, critic and poet, has published one volume of verse, "Chelsea Rooming House," and will publish a second next fall under the imprint of Harcourt, Brace.

Neith Boyce is the author of three novels, "The Forerunner," "The Eternal Spring" and "The Bond." She has contributed to the magazines a number of novelettes and short stories. The Provincetown Players produced three of her short plays, "Constancy," "Winter's Night" and

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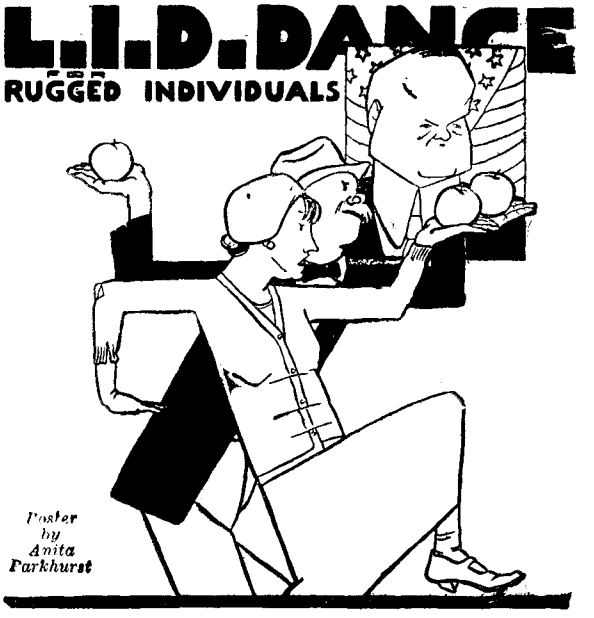

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